JOHN POLLOCK

THE BOLSHEVIK ADVENTURE

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BY

JOHN POLLOCK

Late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.
Author of "War and Revolution in Russia" &c

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Умомъ Россію не понять,
Аршиномъ общимъ не измѣрить,
У ней особенная стать —
Въ Россію можно только вѣрить.

Ф. И. Тютчевъ.

"Russia cannot be understood by reason,
Apply the common rule to her—'tis treason:
Her stature is her own," the poet saith;
"Russia can but be understood by faith."

F. Tyutchev

Great Russia was, is, and will be. Whosoever is allied with Russia, his will be World Victory.

General Oleg Vassilkovsky

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

To MAJOR ROBERT M. JOHNSTON, *of the General Staff of the American Expeditionary Forces.*

MY DEAR JOHNSTON,

This book deals with Bolsheviks' deeds, not their words.

You will remember how Andrew Lang once wrote to Stevenson:

> Dear Louis of the awful cheek,
> Who gave you leave that you might speak,
> While all the world might smile and stare,
> Of other fellows' brindled hair?

I do not indeed propose to imitate the novelist's freedom in revealing his friends to the world; nevertheless, I feel that a word of apology is due for my present public intrusion upon you. Your uncle, General Albert Sydney Johnston, who was killed too soon for the Confederate side during the American Civil War, was one of Lee's most highly-prized lieutenants, and as, in the opinion of some good judges, Robert Lee gave proof of the most brilliant military genius recorded in history, his opinion on this subject

would be hard to question. It was therefore natural that your bent should be for military history. Your mind, trained to the bird's-eye view, and free from the blinkers often imposed on those who only know their own country, has been occupied during the war with the fruitful consideration of strategy in practice, and if I address you now it is because at a distance I have tried to apply to the solution of some problems of the war the principles your teaching by the spoken and the written word has often made clear to me.

I went to Russia in March, 1915, to do relief work among refugees from the area of the war and returned last Thursday. In the interval I saw something of the front, much of the revolution, and more of the Bolshevik *régime* than was given to most Englishmen to see. I was in Petrograd during both the revolutions, in Voronesh when that town was taken by a band of Bolshevik ruffians fleeing from the Harkov front, in Moscow at the time of the attempt on Lenin's life, and in Saratov during Trotsky's visit there prior to the taking of Samara. Not being an official personage, and compelled during the last six months to live under a disguise, I was able to travel about the country with some freedom and to watch events from an independent angle. So lately as January last I travelled from Petrograd to Saratov, and it was on my return thence that I was denounced and narrowly escaped coming to a premature end in the capital. When I went to Russia I did not speak Russian, and

my ideas about the country were drawn from books and acquaintances. Russia, however, is so different from other European countries that these are by no means safe guides, especially as one seldom hits on the most illuminating book beforehand. Judging from my experience, if I were asked to recommend the best single book from which a preliminary idea of Russia and Russian character might be acquired, I should name Colonel Burnaby's *Ride to Khiva*. As it was, my ideas were vague and merely enthusiastic. I took the legend of "the Russian steamroller" at its face value, and, when this legend was shattered by the German offensive in Galicia and the way in which Russian fortresses fell like ninepins toppling over, it became a matter of absorbing interest to disentangle causes from their maze of effects and by piecing together international "more complete" reports to fit Russia into a real and not a fanciful "future" map of the war. Strategy in Russia turned out to be politics, and politics to be war. To take an instance, General Brusilov has related that he kept the date fixed for his offensive of 1916 a secret even from General Headquarters, for fear that it would be betrayed to the enemy. What staff work could be expected in an army where recourse was had to such methods? It was, I believe, the failure to apprehend the force of the direct action of politics on military affairs in Russia that vitiated the English view of the Russian effort, optimism and pessimism alike being at

different times exaggerated. We did not seem to learn how to pick out the guiding threads, with the result that we committed many blunders and much injustice. This, of course, entered directly into the German calculations. For it was not politics in the ordinary sense that influenced the conduct of the war, but the use made by Germany of political machinery in Russia to stultify the efforts of the Russian army and supplement those of her own. In this respect the Germans displayed a thoroughness that was truly admirable. They neglected no opportunity. Not content with manifold organisations of spies in the Russian army, and doubtless in every Russian department of State, they kept track of even the smallest Allied efforts in Russia, pursuing their representatives with ingenious calumnies, sowing discord between them, and wherever possible insinuating spies into their midst. Under the old *régime* anti-Semitic sentiment was freely exploited to this end, and afforded traps that were rarely avoided by Britons who, having the best intentions, had not the knowledge to enable them to analyse the complex situations they were confronted with. They probably did not realise that analysis was required or that complexity existed, as when Protopopov, the Minister of the Interior, strongly suspected of being a German traitor, was acclaimed from our side as "such an excellent fellow" and with "How lucky Russia is to get a Minister like him!" Despite the advantages of our

patriotism and the recognition of British bulldog tenacity, our position was in reality weak, since much of our information came from sources dominated by hostile influence. Even so, to-day, a well-known statesman gets his information with regard to Russia from his private secretary, who gets it from a London M.P., who gets it from his cousin with a German name, who gets it from a person kept in England by the Bolsheviks for exactly that purpose.

It may be imagined that if the Allied cause in Russia suffered from such causes under the empire, their potency was increased tenfold after the revolution. There was, for instance, a case of a young lady of attractive appearance and doubtful nationality who was a frequent visitor at an Allied institution in Petrograd. Cause being found to suspect her, no better way was discovered of dealing with the matter than to obtain her employment in another branch of the service, where she worked for a considerable time, getting a salary of five hundred roubles a month and spending several thousand. Ejected from this post, she turned up smiling at a certain Consulate in Moscow and was there at the time of the puerile plot to bribe the Lettish guards, which proved the long-sought lever for the Bolshevik Government definitely to oust the Allies from their already precarious position in Russia. The only question in this case seems to be, Was the lady a spy or an agent-provocateur?

But it was not only, or indeed chiefly, ourselves

who were at fault. Other of the Allies too are tarred with the same brush. And here I beg forgiveness beforehand, lest I should offend. You know me, my dear Johnston, for too staunch an American to suspect my goodwill. By heredity and experience my sympathies have long since been strongly enlisted on your side of the Atlantic, and I have too many friends and the memories of too many happy days in America to waver in my affection. But the injunction, *know thyself*, seems to me stronger upon us in relation to the war even than it was before, and in the war we have been all one—on the one side France and her Allies, on the other the Boche, who indeed has had no allies but only vassals. So really I feel there can be no offence if I point to mistakes made in Russia by your country. Russia will recover sooner from the effects of the war than any other European nation, and will in our lifetime probably become the richest and most powerful in the world, not excepting the United States. It therefore behoves us to see where we have gone wrong, so as, if possible, to regain lost ground, and as regards America it must be admitted that much leeway has to be made up.

America doubtless welcomed the Russian revolution more keenly than many of the Allies. The Imperial Government of Russia was supposed to be one of the reasons why the United States did not come earlier into the war, and its downfall naturally created a wave of sympathy with the new-born republic in Eastern

Europe whose country had been regarded as the stronghold of reaction. But the expression of that sympathy was not upon the same level of candour and certainty. I happened to be in Petrograd when Senator Root's mission arrived, and was present at a meeting of several thousand at Pavlovsk addressed by Mr. Edward Russell, the well-known American Socialist leader. Mr. Russell made a speech of fine fervour and simplicity, working up to the climax that America was the home of liberty and that every American would give his life to defend liberty. All went well, the speech being translated sentence by sentence by an interpreter gifted with tremendous lungs, but when he came to the central point this gentleman delivered himself in Russian of the sentiment that America was the home of liberty and that America would see that not one man more had to give his life in the cause of the war; which evoked uproarious applause from all Socialists in the huge building. On inquiry afterwards, I learned that the interpreter attached to Mr. Russell had been chairman of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies of Harbin, and had been engaged by the mission on its way from Vladivostok. A day or two later, lunching with Mr. Root at the Winter Palace, I found that the interpreter-secretary for the day was another gentleman of precisely the same kidney. The mission, in fact, was in the hands of its enemies, who, at critical moments, were thus able to render its best

intentions nugatory. Is it to be wondered at that in these conditions it left without having accomplished anything? The same game was played with other missions, and if M. Albert Thomas did not suffer from such extreme misrepresentations, still even he can hardly have been fully aware of the extent and virulence of the anti-Ally propaganda among Socialistic circles with which Kerensky was in intimate touch. The real test, however, of the Allied representation in Russia was not until after the Bolshevik revolution, when the Embassies were sitting in a quasi-conventual retirement at Vologda, and Sir George Buchanan had already left the country.

It was in the summer of 1918 that an extremely able official of the Russian Red Cross, shortly before that institution was taken over and wrecked by the Bolsheviks, asked me what I knew about the work of the American Red Cross in Russia. I answered, with some surprise, that I should have expected him to answer the question better than myself. To which he replied: "So far as we know, with the exception of distributing condensed milk, they have done absolutely nothing here but political intrigue." Now we have it on good authority that "talebearers are as bad as talemakers," and I would not repeat this; but unless the point is made, it is hard, if not impossible, to understand the course of recent history in Russia. The leaders of the American Red Cross, who may have done excellent work in other spheres, undoubtedly

threw their energy on to the side of the Bolsheviks; and it was understood in Moscow that Colonel Robins, who took part and was photographed in the Bolshevik Mayday parade last year, did his utmost to get the Conciliar Government recognised. As he had some English backing also, there were moments of very high tension in pro-Ally circles, and though recognition did not take place and the tension slackened, nevertheless an uneasy feeling remained after Colonel Robins' departure, which was not improved by the belief that the American Government stood in the way of intervention. The American public can hardly have grasped the fact that the War was going on all the time in Russia, and that the Bolshevik *régime* was nothing but a German *barrage;* had they done so, they could not have calmly accepted a policy that has cost them the sympathy of the entire upper class in Russia. Russians, who knew Americans as little as the latter did them, were ready when the United States came into the war to revise their somewhat crude notions and go forward hand in hand with a new Ally in the common cause; but the experience of watching American representatives apparently willing to enter into a compact with their national enemies, which might have put the latter into power so solidly as to render their removal impossible, destroyed their budding sympathy. Since that time Russians have witnessed one after another effort, some public, some private, in the same direction: the proposal of the

Prinkipo Conference, rightly or wrongly, was attributed to President Wilson; another attempt to enter into peace negotiations with the Bolsheviks was barely averted; and there have been at least two schemes for sending into Russia food that every Russian knew would benefit no one but the Bolsheviks. Various American journalists and representatives of charitable societies have in the last few months visited Russia, more or less under Bolshevik protection, and have not scrupled to express opinions favourable to the Bolsheviks; which has about the same effect on Russian educated opinion as it would have upon Americans if Russians visited and belauded an insurrectionary Negro Government that had mastered, say, South Carolina and murdered most of the whites. When it is observed that some, at least, of these knight-errants are unacquainted with the Russian language and with the customs of the country, it ceases to be surprising that they take whatever they are told by the Bolsheviks as gospel; but this is only the more exasperating to Russians, who see the tragic situation of their country misrepresented to the outer world by persons who they consider have no right to express an opinion of any kind.

That what must be called the American pro-Bolshevik movement did not express the feelings and desires of a large part of the best representatives of the American nation is evident. If objective evidence of this were required, it could be found in that remark-

able publication of the United States Committee on Public Information, *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy*. No one studying the long series of documents collected by Mr. Sisson, of which perhaps six or seven are open to the suspicion of having been tampered with before they came into his hands or of having been copied by his agents from memory, could fail to be convinced of the impossibility of any enemy of Germany making peace with the Bolsheviks. If anyone doubts the testimony of that cloud of witnesses, of whom I am probably the latest, to the truth concerning the acts and intentions of the Bolsheviks, let him read Mr. Sisson's pamphlet. I should perhaps say that I saw it for the first time after escaping from Russia in February, so that his documents can have had no effect on my judgment, which was formed purely by a consideration of the facts I had observed. The reader will find there, not a description of events in Russia, but an adequate account of their causes, and an explanation of what has happened. Indeed, only neglect of Mr. Sisson's work could have made possible the frame of mind of a New York banker who explained the United States attitude towards the Bolsheviks by a desire of American business men to have the cards reshuffled and a fresh deal made. Lord Acton once being asked what was the moment of greatest danger in England's history, answered, "When Fulton offered to transport Napoleon's army across the channel by steamship." Had he lived he

would have seen a greater danger even than this, when the Allied Governments, having beaten Germany in the field, let themselves be brought to the verge of a peace with her agents, our most dangerous enemies, in Russia. But this was a danger not only to England, but to America also, since Bolshevik Russia, reorganised by Germany, would have been able to meet and crush the entire world.

Of the studies in Bolshevik history that make up this volume, only two have been published before. Taken as a whole, and especially those now offered to the public for the first time, they give a fairly comprehensive account of development in Russia from the fall of Kerensky to March, 1919. They do not aspire to be history. It would be too soon to attempt a history of the Bolsheviks, and it is doubtful if a full and true history of their adventure can ever be written. But I venture to hope that the facts I have brought together and the account of my own experiences will shed some light on dark places in Russia. If I could think that they will reveal part of the truth to Americans, my ambition would be more than satisfied.

I should perhaps add a word on a delicate subject. You will in this book find numerous references to the part played by the Jews in Bolshevik Russia. It is impossible not to mention so prominent a feature in the Bolshevik movement, but it must not be thought that my remarks are inspired by any feelings of hos-

tility to the Jewish race. It is not the fact that all the Jews are Bolshevik; on the contrary, very many of them have suffered bitterly from the terror. This could not be otherwise, when it is reflected that the legal profession and journalism in Russia are largely recruited from among men of Jewish blood, and that the Press and the law courts have been abolished by the Bolsheviks. The journalists especially did good and dangerous work for Russia until they were finally muzzled. But it is the fact that almost all the Bolshevik leaders are Jews or have intimate Jewish connections. The reason for this is clearly that the persecution of the Jews by the Imperial Government implanted in many Jewish exiles an ineradicable hatred of Russia, and it was of this hatred that Germany took advantage in sending Lenin and his associates back to their foster-country. Russian Jewish patriots were unable, more than others, to stem the tide of treacherous propaganda conducted by them, and, like others, have suffered from its success. Russian Jews have now indeed a terrible grievance, but it is against the Bolsheviks, not against Russia; for the preponderance of men of Jewish blood in the Bolshevik camp has resulted in what did not exist before among Russians, though it did among Poles, a deep-seated exasperation against the Jews as a whole, and a grave distrust of their motives. In former days pogroms were engineered by gendarme agents at the bidding of reactionaries in the Government; but when the Bol-

sheviks are cleared out the difficulty of the true representatives of democratic Russia, come to reconstruct the State, will be to restrain the people itself from wreaking vengeance on the race of which the Bronsteins, Apfelbaums, Rosenblums, and Joffes are the reckless and criminal offspring. I believe the new leaders will do their best to prevent anti-Semitic excesses, but if they cannot, it is Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev whom the Jews will have to thank. A new chapter in history is about to open, but the old causes remain and will work themselves out in ways that we cannot foresee but will surely be bitter with suffering and wrath.

Yours ever,

JOHN POLLOCK.

May 22, 1919.

NOTE.—The "Sovieti," which are supposed to constitute the governmental system of Bolshevik Russia, are generally referred to in England by their Russian name. The objection to this seems to me that the word "soviet," if it represents anything to an English reader, must seem to imply something exceptional and grand. In fact, the word is the ordinary Russian for a council of any description, *e.g.*, the Cabinet Council or the administrative body of an insurance company. In the Bolshevik system it is used shortly for "a Council of Workmen's, Peasants', or Red-

Armymen's* Deputies," or for the Council of the People's Commissars, which is at the top of the system; and the epithet "sovietsky" for anything appertaining to such a Council. It appears to me simpler to use the English words "Council" and "Conciliar."

* The word "soldier" has been abolished by the Bolsheviks as reactionary, and replaced by "Red-Armyman."

THE BOLSHEVIK ADVENTURE

CHAPTER I

DOWN WITH THE BOLSHEVIKS!

As Cato ended every speech with the words *Delenda est Carthago!* even so now should every patriotic British citizen and every honest thinking man begin and end his day, begin and end every important piece of business, with the words, *Down with the Bolsheviks!* No one should leave his house or return to it, no one should sit down to table or rise from it, no one should betake himself to pleasure or to work without putting up the prayer in his heart, *Down with the Bolsheviks!* The words should be trumpeted at every street corner, they should be blazoned on every public building, they should be carved in the brain and heart of every man who breathes the air of freedom: *Down with the Bolsheviks!*

Why should we put down the Bolsheviks? "Bolshevik" is the name of the extreme wing of the Russian Social Democratic Party. The word means a

man who wants the big share, who will not be satisfied, one might say, with less than all the lot. The Bolshevik party, which has gone on beyond the teachings of social democracy and has turned itself into a communist party, captured the Russian machine of government a year and a half ago. It captured the machine by force and has continued to rule by force as much of the Russian empire as it can control under the guise of "the Socialist Federative Conciliar Russian Republic." It calls itself "the Workman-Peasant Government." What concern have we with this? And why should we put down a Government that has ruled for eighteen months over some sixty million people? Why should we put down any Government at all in Russia?

We ought to put down the Bolsheviks and their Government in Russia for three reasons. They are reasons that have big names, but they are not the less true reasons, and though we do not often pronounce their names in conversation, it is by them that we regulate every action of our lives and every thought of our minds. They are Honour, Religion, and Interest.

First then, Honour. Honour bids us *Down with the Bolsheviks!* To realise this we must look back a little into history. The revolution of March, 1917, began as a patriotic movement directed against the corrupt intrigues of the Court by men who wanted Russia and her Allies to win the war. Now the Germans, understanding perfectly that if this move-

ment crystallised and from being an inspiration, became an organisation, their last chance was gone, immediately on the revolution taking place rushed the Bolsheviks who had been living in exile in Western Europe and America back to Russia, and supplied them with enormous sums of money to do their work. Their work was exactly to prevent this organisation and by every possible means to lower the fighting spirit of the Russian army, and to dissolve the bonds that united Russia to her Allies. The Bolsheviks were for the most part not Russians at all, but Jews who had suffered persecution at the hands of the Russian Government; they had spent much time in trying to corrupt the Russian prisoners of war in Germany and Austria, and in otherwise working against their country, and now came back determined to revenge themselves on the Russian educated classes, though these had had no control over the Imperial Government and were not in the least responsible for its misdeeds, but had themselves often suffered severely from them. The Bolsheviks were aided by countless German agents and spies, and they succeeded so well in their work that within eight months the Russian army had ceased to exist, and they themselves, the paid agents of Russia's enemy, had seized the machinery of government, that is, the public offices and their archives, the post, telegraph, and telephone, the mint, the banks, the railways, and all arms and ammunition; and within a few months more had

complete control of the printing press and of the food supply of the country. Their power is based solely on force; the high-sounding titles they apply to themselves have no foundation in reality; the elections to the "soviets" or Councils are a sham, and there are no better elections of the Commissars nor any other control over them; there is no republic, no federation, no socialism, if by socialism is meant control by the community of government and of the means of production; and the Bolsheviks maintain themselves solely by the strength of highly-paid guards, composed of Letts, Magyars, and Chinese, while thousands of spies are employed to scent out and denounce opposition. This immense power is used for one chief object: to root out in Russia all sense of patriotism and indeed of nationality. This the Bolsheviks hope to do by crushing the educated classes, for patriotism is scarcely developed in the millions of peasants who cannot read or write. The educated classes were almost all strongly pro-British and pro-Ally, because they believed that through the victory of the Allies freedom would come to Russia. For this they are now being punished. Thousands of officers have been killed by the Bolsheviks because they believed that England would not allow Germany to triumph over Russia. Hundreds of writers, members of the Duma, liberal landlords, public-spirited women, have been flung into prison, and many killed on the pretext of plotting with the English against the Bolsheviks. Tens of

thousands are being starved daily in order that the last spirit of resistance to the Bolsheviks and their German comrades may be squeezed to nothingness. And yet the Russian educated classes are faithful to their belief in the Allies and especially in England. Russia saved the Allies in 1914. Now it is our turn to save Russia. Actively or passively we encouraged the rising at Yaroslavl, where thousands lost their lives, and the plot at Moscow and Petrograd for which scores of patriotic Russians fell into the clutches of the Bolsheviks. We must keep faith now. That is why Honour calls to us, *Down with the Bolsheviks!* If we are not deaf to the claims of the dead and the cries of the living we must obey the call.

Secondly, Religion bids us, *Down with the Bolsheviks!* I do not use the word in a narrow or dogmatic sense. I do not refer to the facts that eleven bishops and none knows how many of the minor clergy have been shot by the Bolsheviks; that famous Church treasures have been plundered and desecrated by them; that holy images have been torn down and lewd posters exhibited broadcast mocking or vilifying the Church. What I mean is that the Bolsheviks have systematically debased and befouled the standards of civilisation that centuries of upward effort have implanted in men's minds. All sense of justice, loyalty, and honesty disappears under their grinding tyranny. Human dignity has been unutterably besmirched. Fair trial does not exist.

Freedom has become a dream. In the times of the bad old autocracy there was yet some meagre control over taxation and expenditure; now there is none. There is not even taxation, but savage imposition of huge fines and forced contributions. No man is safe from denunciation, brutal arrest, long imprisonment so vile that after a few weeks men's hair sometimes turns white, torture, and secret death. Elderly men and delicate ladies are forced to do hard physical work while strong young men look on and jeer at them. The Bolsheviks have introduced the abominable custom of taking hostages to prevent opposition and have murdered thousands of innocent people to terrify or to revenge themselves on their political enemies. They have hired Chinese coolies to murder and torture for them, and these mercenary butchers sell the flesh of their victims in the market as meat. They have declared that women are public property and would make promiscuity compulsory. There is not a sentiment dear to civilised beings, not an aspiration fruitful of good in the world, not an ideal to raise and purify, that they do not pollute and violate. Mammon and Might are their two gods; deceit, crime, corruption, and brutality their offerings upon the altar. In the name of all that is sacred to humanity, Religion joins her command to that of Honour. Should we fail to obey it, our name will be cursed in history as that of men who had a precious treasure entrusted to them and let a gang of cut-throats filch it away.

And, lastly, Interest bids us, *Down with the Bolsheviks!*. If we do not put them down, they will put us down. Not only us, Englishmen, but Frenchmen, Italians, Americans, just as they have put down the real Russians, so that without outside aid it is doubtful that they can get up again. The Red Army, declares Zinoviev, the president of the Petrograd Council, whose real name is Apfelbaum, is destined to fight in the streets of London, Paris, and Rome in the sacred cause of Communism. And Communism, in Zinoviev's sense, means the abolition of liberty, the destruction of property, the stoppage of the factories, the most startling increase of disease, universal dirt, hunger, and terror. Most of all, the Bolsheviks are desirous of smashing the British Empire. It was largely by inculcating hatred of Great Britain, by misrepresenting British ideals and British methods, that they carried out their plan of reducing the fine Russian army to a panic-stricken mob. They hate British justice, British straightforwardness, British thoroughness; they fear British retribution. They believe that India is our weakest point and hope to strike a deadly blow there, by organising a Bolshevik revolution among the Hindoos. With this purpose, they have trained Hindoo agitators in Russia to send to India for the execution of their schemes, and support organisations in neutral countries that have the same object. They are training Chinese agitators, to raise the huge yellow masses of the East against

civilised Europe. This is an awful danger. But even more pressing is the menace of fusion between Bolshevik Russia and Germany. This is the logical result of Germany's having sent the Bolsheviks to Russia. It has been foreseen by the Germans at least from the time when their last offensive on the Western Front failed. If they were beaten in the field they would turn Bolshevism loose on Europe, reckoning on their own sturdiness and tenacity of purpose to pull them first out of the universal devil's cauldron. They have been beaten, and have sued for peace, they have the prospect of an enormous debt to pay; now they think to refuse or stultify the terms of peace, renounce their debt, and turn on their conquerors with a new motto, "Revolutionary Deutschland über alles!" There were those of us in Russia who long ago raised our voice in warning of a moment when the German sergeant might lead Russia's blind millions against the Allies. That moment is now upon us. If we are to avert it, and to prevent Germany from turning our victory against ourselves, we must put down the Bolsheviks in Russia. A strong, free Russia is essential to the peace of Europe. The Bolsheviks are very strong against unarmed Russians in Russia, but they are very weak against a foe, Russian or anybody else, coming in arms from outside. Their body is rotten at the core; at the first blow dealt resolutely and with organised forces it will fall to pieces. All Russia is weary of their iniquities. The pressed soldiers will

not fight. The officers, forced to serve for fear of being shot and, worse, having their families shot, will desert. Even without a blow, twice, in December, 1918, and in January, 1919, there was such a panic in Petrograd on the mere rumour that British troops had been seen in the field that the Bolshevik leaders fled to Moscow and the principal Bolshevik institutions were prepared for instant evacuation. The whole Automobile Division was got ready for the road in two days—not to go against the British, but to run away from them. Last summer it would scarcely have cost an effort to put down the Bolsheviks. This year it will still be easy. Money, ammunition, food, and organisation are all that is needed for the forces already in the field against the Bolsheviks. More Allied troops they can do without, though British volunteer detachments would add greatly to their prestige and strength. But if we wait till the Germans have performed their transformation scene and emerged with their brains and method to organise Bolshevik Russia and lead it against us, the story will be very different. Then we shall have to fight the war over again and at a disadvantage. It may be expensive now to put down the Bolsheviks, but it will be much more expensive to defend ourselves from them then. More expensive in money, in effort, in blood. Hungary and Bavaria are proofs of the folly of supposing that any barrier of buffer-States, or "cordon sanitaire," can keep out the Bolsheviks, and though

pacific to-day the evil may break out afresh to-morrow. A wooden fence cannot keep out a swarm of hornets. The only defence against the hornets is to find and destroy their nest. The nest of the Bolsheviks needs no finding. All we have to do is to summon up determination to destroy it. But destroyed it must be, or the hornets will destroy us. Honour, Religion, and Interest are at one. *Delenda est Carthago!* Down with the Bolsheviks!

CHAPTER II

CHRISTMAS UNDER THE BOLSHEVIKS

"RAT-TAT! Rat-tat!"—"Who goes there?"—"'Er, I want to see Mr. Petrov—Flat No. 115."—"Do you live here?"—"No, no. I have only come to see Mr. Petrov—on business, the most urgent business. I am quite alone; here is my visiting card." The great gate, through the chink in whose postern a mouse could hardly squeeze, stirs and clatters, and the postern is opened three inches more: a stout chain is visible that will hold it in that position against a score pushing from without. "Pass your card in: after nine o'clock no stranger can enter without leave of the chief of the guard." An anxious hand moves, and while the pasteboard is examined the inquirer is conscious of an uncomfortable scrutiny from three pairs of eyes within and of the business end of a carbine turned towards himself. "Pass in." Mr. Petrov's visitor is admitted, and the postern hastily shut and double-locked behind him.

Are we in France during the occupation of Bordeaux by the Black Prince? Is this a blockhouse on the eve

of a Red Indian raid? Or a scene from the private warfare of King Stephen's barons? The situation will bear the comparisons, and is perhaps more fantastic and uncertain than any; for we are in Petrograd at Christmastide in the year '17, where the Bolsheviks or Maximalists hold sway.

An Englishman's house is his castle, we say, but it is nothing to the state of fortification maintained by the committee of a house in the capital of the former empire of Russia. House-committees sprang spontaneously into being when the Bolsheviks first seized the power in Petrograd. For a considerable time they were, and indeed now remain, the only protection against organised pillage, debauchery, and murder. They procured weapons at high prices from dealers, or at low ones from members of the Red Guard unscrupulous enough to part with their rifles to the bourgeois—they organised guards of able-bodied tenants, sometimes reinforced by paid Caucasian bravos, who keep the gates in watches of three or four hours throughout the night, and can, if need be, summon from twenty to sixty men to their aid in a few minutes. They have no existence in law, but have to be reckoned with by the Bolsheviks' masters as possessed of a certain, if indefinite, force. They have organised co-operative societies, through which it is possible to obtain bread, paraffin, and sugar without waiting for several hours in the street queue, and salt herrings at a third of their retail price, which is a

rouble and a half; they afford a means of human intercourse at a moment when few leave home after dark save on serious affairs and bursts of musketry in the street break the stillness of the long evenings. On Boxing Day at a fashionable theatre there were twenty people in the house, and a few nights before a gentleman was undressed by a gang of robbers and flung into the canal almost at its doors. People have been stripped of valuables and clothes, as it were, in Portland Place or St. James's Square, and an ex-Minister of the revolutionary Government was cleaned out a few steps from his house when returning from a political meeting.

"No doubt," said to me the head of one of the departments in the Ministry of Justice, "people in Europe imagine that murder goes on uninterruptedly in Russia, that it is unsafe to walk in the streets, and that the revolution literally boils at every moment. Not a bit! We go our way as if nothing had happened, we do our daily business, eat, joke, go to the play, balls are given every night by 'the Comrades' —in fact, life remains life, only its episodes are changed." We went our way, however, it being night time, in the middle of the street, and my companion's right hand was in his pocket. I had little doubt that it rested lightly on the butt of an automatic pistol. So did mine. He is an accomplished, learned man, well read in French history, an upright official and former judge with twenty years of good service

behind him. In company with the other chiefs of his Ministry he has now been dismissed by the Bolsheviks and is seeking an occupation, if only at two hundred roubles a month, which is worth perhaps £100 a year.[1]

Experience of the Russian troubles throws light on a phase of the French Revolution that has occasionally caused misunderstanding. Some years ago M. Frantz Funck-Brentano published a paper showing with what frivolity Parisians of the time regarded the Revolution, how they went to the taking of the Bastille as to an entertainment, and that Molé's acting "aux Français" ranked in interest with the fall of the Tuileries. The serious were scandalised and asked how it was possible that the world should have been mistaken in its estimate of such notorious events. Others inferred that then the events were indeed of far less importance and that historians had subsequently, in the journalistic phrase, written them up. In reality there is no contradiction. Those who have lived through the past months in Russia know how in moments of great peril, when the fate of nations may be in the balance, curiosity will get the upper hand of a deeper emotion and interest in everyday affairs persists as a guiding force for those who do not take part in the shooting. Moreover, at moments when tragic events obsess the mind and talk has ranged over them, debating them from every angle and never reaching any but the same

[1] At the pre-war rate of exchange, 1 rouble = 2*s.* 2*d.*

conclusion, it is imperative to find relaxation in other thoughts, even in mere silliness. The difference between revolution as history and as life is that, in the former, the leading facts are grouped together so as to shadow forth the ideas that underlie and direct them; in the latter, between events of importance occur long spaces of time that their witnesses spend in the daily round, the while straining every faculty to comprehend the march of fate, so as to foresee and guard against its next blow. The waiting seems endless, wearisome, yet when the event arrives it is always with the sensation that it has come too soon, and that its successor treads on its heels with breathless haste.

Colonel Walden, late senior commanding officer of his Majesty's Rifle Regiment of the Guards, Knight of St. George, and veteran of the Japanese War, deserves to be gibbeted as high as Haman. For it was he who commanded the Red Guard at Tsarskoe Selo when Kerensky, having fled from Petrograd in the disguise, some say of a sailor, others of a sister of mercy, moved upon the capital with twenty guns and an insignificant force of Cossacks, and he it was who, despite the strong anti-Bolshevik opinions he was wont to express to brother officers, turned the probable defeat of the hordes of fanatic workmen and motley soldiers drawn from every regiment in Petrograd into the success that gave Lenin and Trotsky their dictatorial throne. The fighting in Petrograd

itself was purely local, and was for the possession of the Winter Palace, the telephone station, and the military training colleges. They were defended by Junkers, those gallant lads whose ambition to be Russian officers can never be fulfilled, and the first of them, dreadful to relate, by a detachment of the Petrograd Women's Battalion. There was no leadership, no plan, no preparation, no visible object; nothing but devotion in a cause that the defenders believed to be Russia's and death and suffering, and savagery on the part of the attacking sailors and workmen after the points were won. Some of the women captured, it is believed, were violated: there were cases of subsequent madness and suicide; men were starved, or clubbed to death, or vilely used. Forty Junkers caught after the taking of the Winter Palace were sent to the fortress of Peter and Paul that frowns across the Neva. "Stand here and wait: we shall kill you to-morrow," they were told, but they managed to slip a bar in their prison window and swam the river to a spot between two guards, the good swimmers helping the worse. They climbed up a drain-pipe to the upper storey of their college that abuts on the quay, changed into civilian clothes, out again the same way, and footed it to Luban, fifty miles along the railway to Moscow, hiding in ditches when they saw anyone coming. Thence they boarded a train to a station not far from Moscow and there dispersed. He who narrated the tale did not think

it out of the common. If caught they would all have been killed: that knowledge probably dulled their imagination, while it gave them strength beyond their own.

At Tsarskoe when the fighting was over the Red Guards, who had lost heavily, refused admittance to the hospital to the wounded Cossacks and tore the bandages off their limbs, threatening to throw them all into a pit and burn them alive with paraffin. Here, too, they butchered a priest while he prayed for the deliverance of Russia from civil war.

In Moscow the affair was more prolonged. The Bolsheviks were far less numerous than in Petrograd, where they counted all the large working-class population and much of the garrison; they were less ably led, and only conquered with the aid of sailors from Cronstadt sent down to stamp out the hydra of counter-revolution, as Socialist writers like to put it. In both they had to call upon the skill of their ready allies. At the taking of the Winter Palace, German and Austrian prisoners of war were observed [1] taking part in the operations. At Moscow, after the Bolsheviks had bombarded the Cadets' Corps, that is, the preliminary military training college, for three days, overshooting their mark from both sides and causing much loss to their own people, they invited

[1] Among others, by the staff of *L'Entente*, the able Franco-Russian paper that kept warm the seat of the suppressed *Novoe Vremya* until it was itself suppressed.

a German officer to lay the guns; on which he placed ten shells running into the building and forced its surrender. The Kremlin, bombarded from three points with six and eight-inch guns as well as lighter metal, profited by this paucity of experienced gunners and fortunately suffered less than was at first believed. One of the outer gates, however, has been considerably damaged, and it is reported that the monastery and at least one of the cathedrals inside the walls were hit by shells, though the strict control exercised over visitors prevents independent verification. There can be hardly a doubt that a great part of the Petrograd Church treasures and objects of art from the Hermitage sent to the Kremlin for safe-keeping from the Germans will ultimately be found to have vanished.

Though the Kremlin was not destroyed and the church of St. Basil the Blessed not burnt, nevertheless Moscow suffered enough from the Bolshevik fury. Within a ring of a quarter of a mile from the Kremlin, which is the centre of the city, hardly a pane of glass escaped smashing, either from concussion or from rifle and machine-gun fire. Numerous small churches and shrines were riddled with bullets. At the junction between one of the main streets and the inner boulevard that encircles the town four large houses, nearly the size of small London blocks, have been burnt out, and many of their residents perished in the cellars. The Hotel Métropole had its upper

storeys wrecked; eight high-explosive and some fifty shrapnel shells found their billet here. Inevitably the belongings of guests were rifled by the drunken soldiers, who also broke into the Little Theatre, the famous " théâtre de Molière russe " across the street, and ransacked the wardrobe of the leading actors. Life has come to have such a precarious value that no one seems to have attempted an accurate count of human losses; but it is probable that in the fighting at Petrograd, Moscow, and Tsarskoe Selo the casualties totalled not less than ten thousand.

The fight at Tsarskoe Selo was the end of Kerensky. Known before the revolution as a lawyer of mediocre attainments, his rise to power was the result of the absence from the scene of any strong personality that might have interrupted the spread of the legend from which his gigantic and mushroom popularity was derived. He was a Socialist intellectual at a time when respect for intellect had not yet been smothered in the army by the catchwords supplied from Germany, and there was no man of real eminence in the same position: that was all. Vain, weak, hysterical, unprincipled, self-convinced, maybe by the catchpenny phrases that were all the core of his eloquence, supporting, condoning or ignoring the worst excesses, the most slavish errors that accompanied the ruin of the army and the dissolution of stable government, he drove the ship of State on to rocks faster than a man of more apparently criminal

character might have done. Fear of being supplanted by the Cadets (the Party of the People's Liberty) stayed his hand when, in July, any decent patriot would have put down the Bolsheviks once and for all—a whiff of grapeshot would have done it; yet greater fear of General Kornilov led him to lie to that true lover of his country and son of the Russian soil, and to invent, with the aid of Nekrassov and other Socialist tutors, the legend of his " mutiny " that was the last stroke to the possibility of military efficiency. Fearful alike of being held too moderate and too extreme, without policy or standard, he forfeited the support of every section of the nation and fell, an object of scorn or hatred to all. His last acts, in summoning a company of girls to the defence of the indefensible Winter Palace, whence he himself fled, leaving them to fall into the hands of the sailors from Cronstadt, and in sacrificing the lives of the Junkers in Petrograd by an order to seize the telephone exchange when he must have known that his promise to enter the capital in victory in a few hours was an empty boast, can hardly give him a lower place in history than that which was already his due. Towards Russia and her Allies his attitude, in relation to the Bolsheviks, was that of a decoy who whistles in front of his victim for the actual assassin to come behind and deal the deadly stroke.

In this estimate of Kerensky there is one fact that is not taken into account. It has been remarked that

when Lenin was under sentence of arrest, all the efforts of Kerensky did not succeed in finding him; now that Kerensky is under sentence of arrest by Lenin, not all the latter's million hounds can unearth the vanished Premier. There are not found wanting those who draw the inference that a closer bond unites the two leaders than either would publicly admit, and that serving the same masters neither could afford to hand over the other to justice.

The completeness of the Bolshevik triumph shows how even the most impartial observers were guilty during last summer and autumn of excessive optimism. Evident as was the collapse of administration and the terrifying deterioration in every form of life, the canker under the surface had eaten even more dangerously into the structure of society. Only the seizure of the reins by a band of usurpers, mostly not of Russian blood, openly boasting that they served the interests not of Russia but of International Socialism, was needed finally to disjoint the once imperial machine and change the inheritance of Ivan, Peter and Catherine into a series of inchoate, weak and hostile quasi-republics, tormented by civil war, and united only by spectres of hunger and bankruptcy spreading over the land. To fortify their work the Bolsheviks have abolished the freedom of the Press. They have, for the first time in history, prohibited newspapers from publishing advertisements. They have abolished the inviolability at-

tached even in the days of tyranny to members of the supreme assembly of the people. They have abolished the existence even of the Courts of Justice. They have seized the banks. Patriots such as the sailor, Batkin, famous revolutionaries like Burtsev and Purishkevich, the slayer of Rasputin, are flung into prison; in the general persecution no one feels that his liberty and property are secure. But with liberty the Bolsheviks have indeed no concern. They are the real tyrants and openly say that if the Constituent Assembly, such even as they allow to meet, is not to their liking, they will go their way without its sanction.[1] Their aim is admittedly that of the German Social Democratic leaders—the dictatorship of the working class. If they cannot achieve this they make no concealment that they would rather have an autocracy again, Russian or German, than a republic with the educated elements predominant. The first they could upset later; the second would be too strong for them. Not a few competent persons believe that they know a working-class domination to be impossible and are deliberately playing to bring back the Romanovs. The enemies of the ex-Empress appear to earn their specific disfavour, while negotiations have been carried on with the Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich and the notorious former Minister of Justice, Shcheglovitov. Meantime, nothing that can

[1] In fact, as soon as it met, the Bolsheviks destroyed it by force.

terrify and disgust respectable citizens is omitted. For days together Petrograd has been the prey of prowling bands that, to the accompaniment of rifle and machine-gun fire, sacked the wine-stores, beginning with the cellars of the Winter Palace, and ending in a three days' siege of a vodka distillery near the Admiralty stores. The "Red Guards" sent to turn out the drunken soldiers not infrequently fell on the bottles and had to be dealt with by detachments of sailors, while the latter sometimes turned their attention from the liquor in private cellars to the silver in the house. The railways are slowly dying. Every month nine hundred engines go out of service, and only ninety are repaired. Their place is taken by goods engines which crawl at about fifteen miles an hour. The journey from Petrograd to Moscow (as it were, Edinburgh to London) now takes from eighteen to thirty hours instead of the former twelve, and tickets are no longer issued beyond Moscow. Since the peace negotiations and the degradation of officers, the "comrades"—a word brought into derision and loathing by the brutal egoism of the soldiers—pouring away from the Front to their homes, literally storm the trains, demolishing windows and doors in their impatience, and there are ticket-holders who have had to wait for days before being able to get a fraction of a seat. Trains are warmed perhaps for six hours in twenty-four, and are filthy. The underpaid railway servants con-

stantly threaten to strike. In this turmoil the post and telegraph work intermittently and render still more haphazard the already difficult communications. More and yet more factories close down owing to the exorbitant demands of the workmen, and to want of fuel or raw material. A large part of Petrograd receives electric light only for six hours a day, the inconvenience of which will be recognised on reflecting that in winter Petrograd hardly enjoys more than six hours' daylight. Candles and paraffin are very expensive and difficult to procure. In short, the mechanism of life becomes more unhinged day by day and there is no one that does not face the possibility of its breaking down altogether. Then life will become, in the classic definition to which it even now approaches, "nasty, brutish and short." Mereshkovsky, repentant of his early ardour for peace at any price, wrote that three things alone were lacking to the peace demonstration held on the 30th of December. Three coffins, he said, should have been borne in the procession: that of the conscience of Russia, that of the liberty of Russia, and the white spotless coffin of Russia herself.

The German success in forcing an armistice and, it may soon be, a disastrous peace[1] on Russia is the heaviest defeat incurred by Great Britain since at least the battle of Austerlitz. "Roll up the map of Europe," cried Pitt in agony of soul: that of Russia

[1] [Written early in 1918.]

has been torn to shreds by Teuton agents under the eyes of Britain, to her grave despite, and without her lifting a finger to prevent it. The Russian army has ceased to exist: its officers by the last blow reduced to the ranks, its every service disorganised, without aim, system, or discipline, it lies on the face of the land, a huge, dismembered carcass, putrefying before it has ceased to breathe, and by its poisonous weight stifling all hope of healthy movement in the nation. The Front lies open. Bread is sold to the Germans. German prisoners of war already almost freely cross to their fatherland. Their fellows still in Russia drill and are armed in expectation of speedy return or of a mission nearer the banks of the Neva. The bevy of German officers and diplomats that welcomed the New Year in Petrograd are free, surrounded by the agreeable attentions of Herr Trotsky-Bronstein, to exercise the same arts by which their country obtained the vassaldom of Turkey and of Bulgaria. The feigned shrieks of disapproval emitted by the inspired Conciliar Press on the partial publication of the German terms of peace will hardly disturb them: they know that the rule of Kerensky and Lenin has destroyed Russia's last power to defend herself, had she indeed the will.

In this catastrophe the position of Great Britain and her Allies is one of profound humiliation. We have allowed ourselves to be pushed nearer and nearer the edge of the bed that we and our friend

had taken at the inn by an impudent robber who has crept in, stolen our friend's watch and pistol, slapped us, shoved us, spat in our face, and will perhaps before long heave us over the side and lord it in our place. We the while have shown a truly Christian resignation. Our action, even when the final move for our ejection began, was confined to a refusal to recognise the interloper. We would not treat with him, we would not recognise him or answer him. We would only let him insult us and injure us and triumph over us. Thus it has come about that while hardly two educated Russians out of ten will believe that the British Embassy in Petrograd did not engineer the revolution of February, which has proved the cause of their undoing, our enemy, who knew how to profit by it as we did not, has successfully represented us to the uneducated masses as oppressors of the people and vampires draining the world's veins to swell our money-bags.

It may be that nothing would have staved off for long this degradation. The anarchic conditions of the upper classes and the good-hearted laziness of the bulk of the nation, accustomed to accept the accomplished fact without resistance, might always have paralysed the organisation of our interests. The geographic position, too, was against us. It was against us that we were many and our enemy's mind was single. Weapons were at his command that would be hard for a Parliamentary Government to

justify, the more so for one snapped at by curs ever ready to yelp against their country. Yet when all this is counted it must be admitted that our policy of do-nothing-and-hope-for-the-best has been tragically weak. We have never let pass an opportunity to declare that we will not interfere in the internal affairs of Russia. This is not a policy that would have been endorsed by Pitt or by Canning. We ought to have interfered. We should have been impervious to the fears of the snobs before the revolution as well as to the taunts of the mob since. Let Russia work out her fate by herself; but during the War, and until the murderer of Belgium and of freedom is brought to his knees, we should never have borne hindrance from her in our great task. We took over the port of Archangel: we should have insisted on taking control of the railways. We put men into the Treasury: we should have demanded men and women known for German agents to be put out of the Government. Last year we presented, but a month late, a few Easter cards to the soldiers: we should have distributed five million pounds in presents to them, and it would have been cheap. We should have remembered that the mob does not respect cowardice: it respects the fist. Fist-rule is the basis of the Bolshevik power. We took down the name of a British queen from over the Anglo-Russian hospital in Petrograd to pacify the demagogy, and everyone saw in the action the curved back of a toady. We

should have better followed the example of a Russian Red Cross Commissioner who, to speak with a Bolshevik delegation, put on not only his Russian but a Serbian decoration, so that his interviewers might have two crowns before their eyes.

The representatives of the Allies in Petrograd throughout the War have had a steady lead of staunch patriotism from the British Ambassador, but it would have needed the vision of a Lincoln and the suppleness of a Barillon to cope with a series of situations requiring the maximum of insight, stubbornness and dexterity.

"Great is our land and bounteous, but there is no order in it. Come ye and rule over us." Thus, according to legend, did the Slav chiefs write to the Northmen, and Rurik and his two valiant brothers came and ruled in the land. During the last three months the same cry has gone up from the Russian educated classes, as almost from one man. "I cannot understand the Allies," said a member of the second Duma. "Do they mean to wait till the Germans come here and organise an army agaist them? I have lived in the country in Russia half my life and I know the people. To-morrow they will kiss the toe that kicks them to-day. They are children. When they slaughter stock and burn seed-corn, do you think they understand what they are doing? The policy of grabbing the land without system or reason means ruin to themselves, and very

soon when the Germans come to make order they will welcome them. Then they will march against the Allies just as they did against Germany in 1914." The question was put to an artillery colonel from the Caucasian Front. "Not fight for the Germans? They will fight for anyone who takes a stick to them. A score of German *Feldwebel* will give you the best soldiers in the world." "The Allies ought to have treated Russia as Europe treated China in the Boxer troubles," said a Jewish lawyer. "Let the Americans come, or the Japanese, or the English, or the French; if they do not the Germans will." It may be safely said that the most patriotic Russians yearn for the possibility of a punitive expedition. In the more than likely absence of any such, and if the Cossacks have not the strength to master the North, it must be expected that twenty or thirty years will pass before signs of civilised progress reappear in Russia. At present she is living on the remains of capital inherited from the days when people worked and some order was preserved, and when these are exhausted and when necessity has schooled the present universal irresponsibility, a new structure will have to be built afresh from the foundations. But to accuse the Russian educated classes of what has happened is completely to misunderstand the situation. Nothing could be more stupid or cruel than the slights which Russian officers in France and England feel to imply that they are guilty of

treachery. They are the martyrs of the German intrigue that has dissolved the State of Russia. Nor must even the mass of the people be judged too harshly. They were cut off from the light by a corrupt Court, a reactionary bureaucracy, and a frivolous aristocracy. They know not what they do. In their blackest crimes, their most ruinous blunders, they are still a people of gifts beyond the common, a people that deserve our sympathy, our deepest pity, our prayers, but not our hate.

CHAPTER III

BEHIND THE VEIL IN MOSCOW

For fourteen days [1] Moscow has been without newspapers, save those which the Council of People's Commissioners and their party are pleased to issue. For fourteen days Moscow has been without telephone, save for the convenience of the Conciliar Government and its satellite institutions. And this state of things, unprecedented in the world as we know it, may last for an indefinite time and indeed is quite likely to do so until the Germans occupy the city, should it be to their liking. The effect must be much the same as that of life on the occupants of a harem. We live behind a veil as dense and as palpable as that severing the seraglio from the outer spheres, and whatever news comes to us must percolate through, or drift over or under the curtain.

To say that the murder of Count Mirbach, German envoy to the Council, which called forth or was the pretext for the total suppression of freedom of the

[1] The second and third weeks of July, 1918.

written word, was a shock, would be to give a false impression. The news was staggering by the thought of what it might lead to; but no one, save doubtless the Bolshevik and personal friends of the deceased, was in the least shocked. Once the fact, rumoured within two hours of its accomplishment, was substantiated, all interest was centred on the question of its consequences. Less concern was expressed for the fate of the luckless diplomat than would have been aroused by the end of an acquaintance's dog. The assassination seemed totally bereft of personal interest. Count Mirbach was a pawn in the game being played in Russia for the mastery of the world. He was a symbol of the Teuton mailed fist. When he moved the tread of the imperial legions was heard. He was the receiving point for the couriers who pass twice a week to and from Berlin in their special railway coaches. When he spoke it was the voice of Germany coming across that special wire laid directly from her capital to the house in quiet Money Alley,[1] which was her representative's habitation. And the bullet that put an end to his life was not intended for the man, but for the menacing Power behind him that has robbed Russia of her glory and her wealth, and dissolved the Russian State.

At 3.10 p.m. on the 6th of July Count Mirbach was shot in his study "in accordance with a resolution of the Central Committee of the Left Social Revolu-

[1] Dénezhny pereúlok.

tionary Party." So said the manifesto of the party printed that night for publication in their organ; but the Bolsheviks overpowered the guard they set round the printing-office and the manifesto never appeared. Of his assassins, one was an assistant-chairman of the Extraordinary Commission for Struggle with the Counter Revolution, which is the chief weapon of the Council for maintaining and spreading its reign of terror; the other a journalist from Odessa, fetched to Moscow for the purpose. The Social Revolutionary Party it was that, under the old *régime*, carried out the majority of the acts of terror directed against the autocracy, such as the assassinations of Sipiagin and Plehve. On no occasion was their work more neatly planned or executed. Their agents drove to the German's house in a motor-car, presented certificates from the Extraordinary Commission, and were immediately shown into the Ambassador's study. There, in the presence, it would seem, of a secretary and a German officer, they pistolled him, and throwing a bomb among the astonished servitors and staff, jumped through the window, climbed the low iron railing that surrounds the garden and drove off in their car, while a German colonel, dashing out of his flat in the house opposite, vainly stormed at the mulish Letts on guard for not shooting. Neither has so far been caught.

In a phrase, the momentous candour of which

perhaps escaped him, Comrade Trotsky-Bronstein officially announced that the murder was directed less against Germany than against the Conciliar Power, that is, the Bolshevik Government of which Trotsky is himself one of the chief props and ornaments. The connection thus authoritatively made between the Bolsheviks and the Boches is further made plain by two facts. First, the representatives of the Extraordinary Commission were without hesitation shown into the German Ambassador's presence; and it must be presumed that Count Mirbach did not habitually hobnob with an association of murderers, save for a fixed purpose, and without the existence of a definite understanding between them. Secondly, the calm with which Germany has swallowed the smartest smack in the face received by a Sovereign Power since Louis the Fourteenth had an Italian minister kidnapped in his own land and clapped into prison for life, proves not that Christian principles have been adopted in Prussia, but that the Kaiser's Government knows its position in Russia to be so secure that it need not budge, and is resolved not to be pin-pricked into budging until the time chosen by itself. "Hier müssen wir doch sitzen bleiben," was the comment, overheard by the writer on the same evening, of a Hun excited into speaking more than he should have. The murder, moreover, declared the official proclamation, was done at the bidding of English and French Imperialists, who also bought Muraviev, the

commander of the Conciliar troops on the Czecho-Slovak front, formerly notorious as the Bolshevik butcher in the Ukraine, with the object of opening the road to Petrograd and Moscow " and all Conciliar Russia " to the " internal enemy."

The " Right " Social Revolutionaries, among whose leaders were Kerensky and Chernov, none too clean-handed or inspired by patriotism themselves, were hurled into nothingness by the October revolution, and are since then reckoned as counter-revolutionaries, " social patriots," " defence-men," and everything that stinks in Bolshevik nostrils. The rebellion now organised by the " Left " Social Revolutionaries, who in October (1917) shot down women and children, and shared fully in the guilt of the massacres of Kiev, Odessa and Sebastopol, is probably to be explained as much on personal as on public grounds. They were being squeezed out of power; yet, fanatic, self-seeking and ignorant though they are, perhaps they perceived that in the present Government there could be no place for persons of Russian blood or of anything approaching to Russian ideals. Their proclaimed object was, by the murder of Mirbach, to force Germany into activity, and then, raising the standard of revolt among the peasants, to harass the enemy by widespread guerilla warfare. They accepted, like everyone, the fact that the " Red " Army is incapable of serious fighting against disciplined and properly supplied troops. Resistance to the Czecho-Slovaks

and to the " White Guards " at Yaroslavl and other places is to be explained by the deficiencies in number and *matériel* of the latter, and Muraviev's fatal mistake probably lay in his ordering the Reds under his command to turn westward against the Germans, whom they would go almost any length to avoid fighting. On the Harkov front, to attain this result, certain detachments have actually been known to throw away their boots, an extreme sacrifice to pacifism in a land where, as in Russia, footgear is beyond price.

The failure of the Social Revolutionaries was made certain by their complete want of concerted action. They took no steps to seize the Fifth Congress of Councils which was sitting in the Opera House, but apparently relied on the mere noise of Mirbach's disposal to overawe the assembly: a hope doomed to be vain when it is remembered that two-thirds of that body are estimated to be in the direct pay of the Bolsheviks. No movement was arranged between Moscow and the provinces, whence, save for a slight diversion on the Kursk front, nothing was reported; and within the capital the seizure of the telegraph office and of the Pokrovsky barracks were isolated acts, as easily dealt with as the defence of the party printing office. Nowhere did the rebels show serious fight; they preferred with strange placidity to surrender to the mercy of the Conciliar power, who had them shot out of hand or executed the following day. As is usual in such

cases, an accurate tally of the dead is impossible to furnish, but it is supposed to amount to some five hundred. Only one of the leaders, Alexandrovich, "unfortunately," in Trotsky's word, was caught and killed. The representatives of the party in the Congress were kept under arrest until the Council had dealt with the armed opposition and were then released.

Definite as was the political situation in its main lines before, the murder and revolt made it still clearer. When Russian sailors were ejected from the telegraph office by a detachment of Magyars, not, hotly contested Trotsky, organised as prisoners of war, but as being "comrade-internationalists," and when other operations for the defence of the Conciliar power were entrusted to Letts, who detest the Russians, and to Chinese, it was no longer possible to blink the fact that the Bolshevik Government, directed almost exclusively by men of non-Russian blood and instincts, is not national, nor international, but purely anti-national. The revolution of February and March, 1917, was a political movement in which all classes were associated; but inspired, originated, and directed by the *intelligentsia*, without the work of whose leaders—Purishkevich, Miliukov, Rodzianko, and Alexeiev prominent among them—it would have been impossible. Its object was to free the nation from treachery in high places, to win the War, to develop the beneficent social and

economic evolution of the country, to secure freedom, equality before the law, redistribution of the land, and representative government. These aims, hard of accomplishment as they would have been in any circumstances, were frustrated from the first by the lack of organisation among the educated classes, and by the agitation of the Bolsheviks and their many sympathisers among other Socialist groups. *Emigrés* swarmed back into the country primed with German gold and German instructions; but the Old Guard of revolution, patriots of Russian blood like Burtsev, Plehanov, Kropotkin, were cold-shouldered, derided, and finally ousted, imprisoned, or killed. At the beginning of the War, the editor of a Petrograd paper detained in Berlin said to his German acquaintances, "You can't hope to conquer Russia with her millions and her immense distances,"—"No."—"What do you count on, then?"—"A revolution." The revolution on which they counted and which they achieved was the October revolution that put the emissaries of Germany into office and handed Russia definitely over to be dismembered by foreigners. The spell these cast on the densely ignorant masses was the watchword of dictatorship by the working class, but in nine months their rule has sunk from even this restricted ideal to be the unblushing tyranny of a group of ruthless men, exercising power against the interests of their usurped country, and solely supported by foreign force.

When Mr. Alfred Gardiner writes in the *Daily News* (quoted in the *News of the Executive Committee of the Council*, telegram from London, July 11, 1918): "If the Conciliar Government maintains its position, relying upon the people, we shall have to count with it and to respect the will of the Russian people," he makes himself ridiculous to all who know the facts. Without their Lettish troops, German backing, and sole possession of the armoury, the Bolshevik Government would be swept away in a week. The Red Army, with its pound and a half of bread per day, its ten pounds of flour and seven pounds of sugar per month, and its seven hundred and fifty roubles[1] per month for each man and all found, would quickly melt. Its main use is to check discontent among the workless by affording them luxury without exertion; it was recently referred to by a military "Commissar" on the German Front with equable scorn as "dieses Lumpenproletariat." But so long as Lenin, Trotsky, and their gang control the entire apparatus of State, and mercilessly execute all who are opposed to them, they will remain in power until they are overset by Germany or the Allies, or can no longer pay the piper. They are here, as all understand, on tolerance. When they cease to be useful to German policy they will vanish as swiftly as spirits of hell at cockcrow. With an effort of will on our side, at once brave and profitable, the Allies, too, could rid Russia

[1] For the married men. Bachelors received 15 Rs. a day.

of them, though less quickly, and lay the foundation of friendship by rebuilding the Eastern Front. Without help from outside the end will not come soon. Meanwhile they call the tune. They have gone forward over the ruins of the Cadets, of the Menshevik Social Democrats, of both wings of the Social Revolutionaries, and of the Anarchists, and it must be thought doubtful that General Alexeiev can rout them even with the help of the Czecho-Slovaks, if Russia's greater Allies hold aloof in misgiving, divided counsels, and incapacity to gauge the situation.

According to common talk, the Allies' view is that they must not act until the Russian people have acted. Regeneration, it is said, must come from within. This line of policy, if adhered to, can only be ruinous to ourselves. For what is the essence of the Bolshevik power? What lies underneath the understanding between Comrade Lenin and the Imperial German Government? The answer is simple. The only real opposition to German ambition in Russia, and still more the only comprehension of what that ambition means to Russia, is in the small educated upper class.

There are among it also marked Germanophile tendencies, but more hostility to the crafty and overbearing Western neighbour. There was also high belief in the capability of the Allies and hope that the War would free Russia from evil influences. Therefore the object of Germany is to crush the spirit of this class, to destroy its leaders, and to

render life so unbearable to the remainder that they will repent the error of their ways and welcome the Germans as saviours from a worse state. It is this class alone that can be held to speak with the voice of true Russia, and for the plans of Germany it is essential that Russia should have no voice and no will. The uneducated, untrained, uncomprehending millions, removed but one generation from the servitude of ages, may in detail hate the German when he is in their midst and has his heel on their necks, but cannot beforehand form a mental picture of what their case would be, those plans once accomplished, or apprehend their further effects. From them no regenerating movement, save after very long experience, can be hoped. On the other side, apart from material inducements offered by Germany to the exiles whom she rushed back in special trains after the revolution, the latter are possessed of an abiding hatred for the Russian *intelligentsia*, as representatives of Slavonic Orthodoxy from which they suffered. And if you wrong us shall we not revenge? The Russian educated class, together with the patriotic sons of Russia in their midst from among the Jewish, Georgian, Armenian, and other nations, are suffering for the misdeeds of the autocracy, to which they were indeed, until recently, often far too lenient. Another yet simpler motive exists. Those upon whom the complex European situation has thrust greatness will not willingly surrender it. It is their day. Theirs are

the sweets of power, the spoils of office. Formerly they lived in cheap furnished lodgings and took penny tram rides. Now palaces are at their disposal, exquisite villas, lordly motor-cars, guards to shoot down their critics, and not a mouse stirring without their leave.

For every reason—ambition, politics, purse, revenge, service to their paymasters—the Bolsheviks must compass the suppression of the educated classes. To that end every form of excellence is banned. In the army, since early spring, all orders and badges of merit have been abolished, so that it is impossible to tell a soldier on duty from a robber, and good marks in the schools; where, moreover, religious teaching has not only been removed from the curriculum, but prohibited to be given even voluntarily. In the Gymnasia, which correspond to our Public Schools, the masters are to be elected by the boys, and the governing council will consist of two elected masters and two hall-porters, who as representatives of the working class will naturally have the pull. The mask of democratic endeavour that once barely concealed the leer of triumphant tyranny is now flung aside with contemptuous indifference. "We are the representatives of organised terror," declared [1] the president of the Extraordinary Commission for Struggle with the Counter-revolution—"this must be said plainly—a terror that is absolutely necessary in the conditions

[1] *Novaya Jizn*, July 8, 1918.

of the revolutionary time we are living through. Our duty is to struggle with the foes of the Conciliar power and of the new order of life. Such are our political opponents, as well as all the bandits, sharpers, speculators, and other criminals who undermine the foundations of the Socialist power. Towards them we know no mercy. We terrorise the enemies of the Conciliar power, so as to stifle crime in its root." And so it is. Men are arrested on the slightest evidence, or none, and taken, in Petrograd, to the building of the former Prefecture, in Moscow, to the premises of a once flourishing insurance company, converted for the purpose. Here they may wait for days or weeks in foul circumstances, without any charge being preferred against them. Many there are who never taste the fresh air again, but are shot at night, untried, uncondemned, impossible to trace. The same thing is repeated within the walls of the local "commissariats," and the Kremlin itself, turned into a fortress for the safeguard of the masters, has earned a horrible reputation in this respect. The murderers of the French Revolution had at least the courage of their deeds. They killed publicly, and after trial that, indeed, dealt out a mockery of justice, but was yet open and known. Those of the Bolsheviks kill in secret, by night, anonymously. There is this, too, that the worst deeds of the French Revolution were inspired by a fervour of patriotism that knew itself betrayed and hunted. Now terror

is used to break the last defences of love of country, and to assist the enemy. To make the point clear we need only compare the execution of Louis the Sixteenth with the murder of Nicolas the Second. Louis was tried, accused, defended, his fate was voted by an assembly of the people, and he was beheaded in an open place, where all might see and all must take their share of responsibility. Nicolas was shot without accusation or defence, without any public act save a resolution by a committee of provincial usurpers. The former deed may have been unjust and criminal, but it was an execution; the latter a cowardly butchery. It is even possible that the ex-Emperor was murdered at the beginning of the last week in June, when the report of his death was current, that it was denied at the time and only acknowledged nearly a month later to suit the convenience of the Council.

If another authoritative interpreter of Bolshevik policy be needed we may turn again to Trotsky. "First," he declared in a speech to the Congress of Councils on June 29, "the bourgeoisie shall be placed upon the register, then it shall be held in a vice." To understand this it must be remembered that a bourgeoisie in the proper sense, the solid, middle-class commercial man, or the *petit rentier*, hardly exists in Russia, and when the term is thus used it means the whole of the educated class, with the addition of anyone else who is against the Bolsheviks.

"For several hundred years," continued Trotsky, "the working class has cleaned up the dirt of the bourgeoisie. Now we will force the bourgeoisie to clean up our dirt! The bourgeoisie, it seems, has begun to raise its head too high; we will crush it down to the earth! We will put the bourgeoisie in such conditions that it will lose all wish to be bourgeoisie! (Loud applause.) Every bourgeois house must be marked. On the gates of every house where seven or eight bourgeois families live must be hung yellow tickets. Let the workmen see to it that they grip the bourgeoisie in the pincers!" The yellow ticket, it will be observed, was the licence issued in the old days by the police to women in registered houses of call. After this it is not surprising that in an official document Trotsky, with elegant simplicity, terms the Russian officers in the Czecho-Slovak forces "prostitutes." A special corps of guards is being formed to weed out counter-revolution in the provinces, and the following have solemnly been declared by the recent Conference of Extraordinary Commissions from all over Russia to be counter-revolutionary: officers, monarchists, the clergy, the Cadets, the Minimalist Social Democrats, the "Right" Social Revolutionaries, Anarchists, all national organisations, professional unions, house committees, and charitable organisations. To these the new corps is to turn its special attention. Even so, in days gone by, the gendarme corps persecuted

persons suspected of progressive leanings, and among the Bolshevik agents, both in the capitals and in the provinces, are in fact many ex-gendarme officers and former agents of the secret police. The amount of the fines levied upon the Press of Moscow in the month of May alone is reckoned to be more than that during the whole of Stolypin's ministry throughout Russia. Former useful servants of the State—judges, officers, civil servants, bank officials—are driven to earn a livelihood as commission agents, cabdrivers, pianists at cinematograph shows, or street hawkers, and their wives by singing at small *cafés chantants* or serving in teashops. There are those who utterly starve, as for instance the head of a large military hospital in Petrograd, a professor of medicine, who died after a nervous breakdown caused by malnutrition. The "bourgeoisie" are forced to dig graves for cholera cases, crowding the hospitals at the rate of some hundreds a day in Petrograd and Moscow, and to carry the bodies of the dead, while office work is performed by those who were orderlies, porters and cleaners. Sometimes the Council pushes its campaign against the *intelligentsia* to the point of ridicule. Thus when too widespread discontent was raised not long since by searches for food in numerous flats in Moscow, the Council reassured the lower classes by a proclamation to the effect that this measure was directed, not against the starving and downtrodden workmen, but against the bloated and tyrannical

bourgeoisie: a statement greeted by frank laughter from peasants and sailors who buy gold ornaments and calmly give orders for a thousand roubles' worth of flowers, or furniture for ten thousand, and their wives fashion papers at twenty roubles the copy and plush at a hundred roubles the metre, while many of the once rich can only exist by selling their possessions to *brocanteurs*. As a fact of minor interest, it may be noted that a parcel of 20,000 French fashion papers was destroyed by "the Comrades" in the post, so as to prevent the bourgeoisie from dressing too well; but German substitutes, sometimes fraudulently passing themselves off as the genuine Parisian article, are sold everywhere.

It is hard to describe and would be impossible to exaggerate the pall-like blight that creeps over every department of Russian cultured life. To take the railways, a journey from one place to another requires days of preparation and troublesome application to three or four authorities for permits of various kinds. First- and second-class coaches have been restored on some lines and better order is maintained than in the spring. On the other hand, on the line between Petrograd and Moscow, the best in Russia, only four trains a day are run at passenger speed; the rest all go as goods trains. In 1914, the railways gave a profit of 1,700,000 Rs.; in 1915, 1,400,000 Rs.; in 1916, 1,200,000 Rs.; in 1917, a loss of two million roubles, and this figure is sure to be

far surpassed in the current year. No one who has not travelled in Russia this summer can imagine the degree of filth and chaos obtaining, especially south of Moscow. At the same time, every possible obstruction is put in the way of travellers; an insufficient amount of luggage is permitted, luggage is liable to be searched and detained for days by authority of any local Council of Deputies, and scarcely any town of importance can be entered without special permission. To get to Harkov, besides Bolshevik papers, a pass from the German Embassy is required, and issued only on the certificate of two known German residents of Moscow. The post is as bad as ever. The telegraph works more quickly owing to the death of commerce and consequent reduction in the number of messages sent, but on July 20 the following places were out of reach of the telegraph from Moscow: Archangel, Vologda, Yaroslavl, Murman, Siberia, Samara, Tiflis, Baku, Ekaterinodar, Rostov, the Ukraine, as well, of course, as the districts of Great Russia occupied by the enemy. Up to now the German conquests have cost Russia 780,000 square kilometres of territory, 46 millions of population, 37 per cent. of her harvest, 26 per cent. of the railway system, 280 sugar factories, 918 tobacco factories, 1,681 distilleries, 244 chemical, 615 paper and 1,073 textile factories. The order of the day is the "nationalisation" of everything, and on everything it has the

same effect. The banking system is ruined. Information is impossible to obtain as to the state of accounts, books have often been lost, remittances from one place to another cannot be made, and one transfer for which permission was by exception obtained took from November to June to be effected. The current accounts at the People's Bank, on which it is now possible to draw without leave being obtained each time from a hierarchy of Conciliar institutions, are regarded by business men as the grave of money. Huge sums of paper money are therefore kept in private residences and offices, which affords rich reward to housebreakers, and intensifies the difficulties of the currency. In industry and commerce, "nationalisation" spells dislocation and starvation. Little by comparison as remains to Conciliar Russia of productive land, the central districts are still brimming with food. But it is impossible to obtain, as there is a fixed price for all products at which it is unprofitable to sell, and those sold at higher prices or transported by private dealers are liable to confiscation. "Bread by force" is the new battle-cry; which means that detachments are sent into the corn-bearing districts to requisition grain with the aid of machine-guns. Bloody fights take place, for the peasants returning from the army provided themselves, too, with machine-guns and have large stores of bombs and rifles; the "supply detachments," as they are called, moreover, terrorise

the railway servants, further disorganise transport, and themselves seize food wagons destined for the towns they were sent out to succour. Moscow barely supports itself on bread at 8-9 roubles, and flour at 10 roubles per lb., brought in by smugglers who run the gauntlet of machine-gun fire turned on to suspected trains, and have liberally to grease the Comrades' palms. Petrograd, easier for the Red Guards to watch, and further from plenty, starves. Rye flour costs 15 roubles per lb., potatoes 4-9 roubles, grey bread 12-22 roubles, and cauliflowers 4-6 roubles per head, butter 19 roubles per lb., eggs 18 roubles for ten. The remains of the textile trade have just received a staggering blow with the sealing-up of eighteen hundred wholesale stores in Moscow and all the retail establishments in Petrograd; and the question is whether the contents shall be credited to their owners in accounts compulsorily opened at the People's Bank, or sequestrated outright. Books can hardly be printed, so great is the expense, the commonest alphabet costs three roubles, and now all libraries are to be nationalised. Soap and tinned foods have recently been added to the long list of goods obtainable only "by card." As there are huge stocks of these articles, the only result is to encourage illicit dealing at immensely enhanced prices. There is scarcely a man, woman, or child who does not attempt to speculate in something. Bribery is rampant, the luxury among speculators—who know that

their time may be short and that the paper money will fall still further in value—revolting, and a general low moral tone prevails. Instead of the most elementary reasonable measures being taken to ensure regularity of production and supply, we have "the struggle with hunger," and "the struggle with want of work," evils loudly proclaimed by Lenin as due to the malice of the educated classes, and now "the struggle with cholera." "At last," said a railway guard, one of a class who peculiarly feel the bitterness of the situation, a class to whom a tribute of praise is due for hard work and constant endeavour, "at last they have an enemy they can't put down with machine-guns."

In all this there is much simple stupidity. Russian public opinion is singularly uneducated in economics, and is in the state of believing that when one man gets rich another must get poorer. This is especially true of the Socialists, to whom the antiquated Karl Marx is a god, while the Bolsheviks believe that force and noise can accomplish everything. But there is also a bottom of calculation in their brutal idiocy. For it is necessary to keep up a state of acute discomfort, in order to attribute it to the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionaries, and so further incense the ignorant against the educated. It is also necessary to prevent the beginnings of ordered life and settled prosperity, in order that German industry may hereafter be without a shadow of competition

in Russia, and that German policy may have a pretext for a move eastwards and find an excuse and a welcome. And the road on which Russia has started is one on which there is no stopping. The trend of the Bolsheviks' policy takes them ever lower, to yet greater extremes. In the government of Voronesh all their crops have been seized from the upper-class proprietors "for the benefit of the Conciliar republic"; in other words, for the enrichment of the local Bolsheviks or to be held in trust for the Germans. But now uneasiness is growing among the peasant proprietors. They have taken the land and stock of the former landlords, and only wish to be left in enjoyment. They anxiously ask visitors if it is not possible to get "a paper" that will confirm their title against newcomers, and there are many inquiries as to when a Tsar will reign again, to give peace and order. The Council's influence, on information received from the governments of Moscow and Novgorod, is coming to be based on the idle and dissipated among the peasants, who are averse to seeing a strong class grow up in their midst, and prevent the industrious from sowing and tilling to their advantage. In the Saratov district, the attitude of the peasants is hostile to the Red Army and Red Guards, who are frequently murdered and thrown into the Volga. In the towns, the Bolsheviks' supporters are markedly different from the old soldiers of the days after the revolution. These

had a look of settled gloom which Russian psychologists maintain was the peasant's expression of contempt for others and of his own superiority. But the Bolshevik myrmidons are frankly overbearing. The natural blackguard or brute that is in every man rises in them to the top. Here is no idealism in the faces—only greed and lust of power. Idealism is in the faces of the sufferers, of the weak, the hungry, those infinitely pathetic figures of wounded officers who sell bootlaces and matches at the street corner. The atmosphere is worse than that of foreign conquest: it is anarchy, crystallised by party discipline, into which no sense of public duty enters, but only a base triumph over vanquished superiors, and it is impossible not to be reminded of Mr. Wells's terrible fantasy, "The Island of Dr. Moreau," for the beast is regaining the uppermost in man.

Hotels in the best situations have mostly been seized by the Bolsheviks, or at all events their best rooms requisitioned. In the provinces they are reduced to an immediate condition of filth and dilapidation, and if in the capitals they do not fall so low, yet rapid wear and tear goes on, for which, of course, they will not pay. Others are sometimes seized by the staff, who term themselves "a working group," and as they are quite without capital the deterioration must be swift. Pauper tenants thus also expropriate houses or flats under cover of the word "commune." The theatre, the one sphere of

activity where work has been up to now more or less normal, feels the hand stretched out over it. Many theatres have been requisitioned by local councils, demands are put forward for a "proletarian repertory," and it has been proposed, in a violent attack made in the News of the Council on Chaliapine [1], to socialise actors. Similarly, in various places it has been proposed to "socialise" women between 18 and 40 years; in other words, to enact compulsory prostitution. In everything Russia is living upon the remains of her past; nothing new is created, but habits of idleness and dishonesty become indelible, and smartness is observable only in the brand-new uniforms of so-called prisoners of war, both Austrian and German, strolling freely in the streets of Moscow and Petrograd. In the former city there are believed to be some thirty thousand. Russians, having this spectacle before their eyes, seeing too the commercial greed that is an extra motive in the suppression of the independent Press, and the daily incitement of the lower classes in papers such as *Poverty*, where it was written: "Nicolas the Second has come to a satisfactory end," may be pardoned for giving way to despair and nausea.

"How I hate your *intelligentsia*," said an educated workman to a lady. "Why?" she asked. "Be-

[1] Chaliapine has since this was written come to heel, and is credited with having received 60,000 Rs. a month during last winter, for singing in Conciliar halls.

cause," was the startling answer, "because of their meekness! Why are they so Christian? Why cannot they hate? They make me sick with their fraternity. A student came to us the other day and preached that we are all brothers and must live in peace. How can a man of sense say that he—or that we—must be brothers with all this *canaille*?"

The *intelligentsia* know this perfectly. They made their mistakes throughout the months following the revolution, until Kerensky finally gave up the key of the fortress to the enemy. Then, beaten, downtrodden, sneered at, in the bitterness of failure and repentance they looked to the Allies to help Russia and help themselves, to the Allies whom they had never betrayed, but had seen betrayed by common foes. But the Allies came not, and even now, when they are in the land, they are yet so distant and hold themselves so aloof that the hand stretched out barely feels an answering touch. We are in the eleventh hour; a few more minutes, and it may be too late. Already the Cadets, who were our best friends, are reported from Kiev to have gone over, driven in disgust at our shilly-shallying, to the German camp. A special set is made against the officers, who almost to a man were pro-Ally. It is not without significance that Captain Shchasny, who piloted part of the Baltic fleet away from Finland before the Germans could take it, was shot on a frivolous pretext on the very day that the remains

of the Black Sea fleet was handed over to them by Lenin. In Moscow and Petrograd the German orientation spreads in circles of which the growth is visible almost from day to day. The organisation of the Red Cross, where sympathy with the Allies was of much value in the past, has been captured; its stores have been confiscated, its former staff dismissed, and it may soon be wholly abolished, for the benefit of foreign speculators who are hovering around the remains of its great medical supplies. The Unions of Zemstvos and Towns have suffered the same fate. Those who were once with us heart and soul are daily forced to leave our side. The force against us is not love for Germany, but hunger and misgovernment. Even now not only men but horses may frequently be seen to fall in the street from exhaustion. Hawks come marauding to the very centre of Moscow, wheeling scarcely above the housetops. This is hunger, stark hunger; but come next February and there will be starvation. And those who are here know that in the Ukraine, for all the German requisitions, is plenty and order despite severity; and they know that disorder and want in Great Russia are artificial. If the Allies will not help, they must take help from the enemy or perish utterly. Above all, they do not understand the American attitude; they see that help does not come from the east, and attribute it to pro-German influence in the United States. They have never heard

of Grant's "Fight it out on this line if it takes all summer," and do not know that the mistake of the mighty Lee's opponent is being repeated on the Western Front, but they do know that to win the War and not lose its results the Allies must win Russia. And they are right. Now or later to drive home our victory the Russian front must be re-established. We let pass the magic chance of the rising at Yaroslavl, that would have helped us to all the north, to the Volga, and the entire line to Siberia. When shall we have such another?

CHAPTER IV

RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE

THE tragic end of that phase of the War which at the beginning of the year 1918 robbed Russia of her fairest city, her richest provinces, and the beneficent conquests of Catherine the Great, was the result of two causes: the Ukrainian movement in Little Russia itself and the Socialist propaganda in the capital and among the troops on the front. It was a reproach justly made against Stolypin that his motto, "Order first, then reform," was a cloak for the repression of all liberalism; but despite the many crimes and cruelties of which he was guilty, he was, according to his own light, a patriot. Time has proved the truth of the charge levelled by him against the Socialists—"The difference between us is that I wish to see Russia great: you wish to see her small." The agitation they carried on throughout the summer and autumn of 1917, if not solely organised and managed in German interests, was, at all events, entirely against those of Russia, from the original "Order No. I." issued by Kerensky and others that destroyed discipline in the

army to the formula of Trotsky-Bronstein, "We shall not fight, but we will not conclude peace," that gave Germany all the north up to the gates of Petrograd, and the two capitals, had it suited her convenience to take them. Without the disintegration of the might of Russia, the Ukrainian movement would not have had strength to bear its fruit. Without the treacherous work that had for long gone forward in Little Russia, natural forces might have been found there to resist the enemy even when the front lay open to him. So rapid and widespread was the success of the German general plan, that few can have been found beforehand even to believe it possible; but the intrigue of the enemy at Kiev was visible to observers from the beginning of the war. Indeed, the ground had been prepared from long ago. As a national movement, Ukrainianism was and still remains a failure. The so-called Ukrainian, or Little Russian, language is recognised as an inferior tongue to Russian and Polish; except for the poetry of Shevchenko, it has an insignificant literature, and the great ornament of letters who arose in the south, Gogol, wrote exclusively in Russian.

The Ukraine, indeed, has claims to be considered more truly Russian than the vast expanse of the north and east. Before the sons of Rurik had established their principalities, the beginnings of civilisation had shown themselves in the south. It was Kiev that gave Christianity to Russia, and throughout the

long oppression of Muscovy by the Tartars the Ukraine preserved a purer strain of Slavonic blood and aspiration. Later in the seventeenth century the ecclesiastical academy of Kiev, where the teaching was in Old Slavonic, became renowned as a centre of learning. While the older memorials of ecclesiastical art in Kiev are among the most prized in the Orthodox Church, in modern times the architecture and adornment of the cathedral of St. Vladimir touches the highest point of Eastern Church art. Nor is Kiev behindhand on the civil side, being the best paved, best lighted city of Russia, one of the cleanest and least unsanitary, and equipped with an excellent water supply from artesian wells. In religion, art, literature, the mental nourishment of Little Russia in our age differs no whit from that of Petrograd or Moscow. Breton differs from Tourangean more than a man of Jitomir from one of Tula. Quicker in intelligence than the Great Russian, livelier in imagination, born under a warmer sun and blest with a more generous earth, the Little Russian is still unmistakably his brother by race and by civilisation. It is true that on the borders of Galicia and of Poland, where the Uniate religion flourished, the Imperial Government committed the grave political fault of allowing a persecution of it by Orthodox prelates. Similar iniquities, both ecclesiastical and civil, were committed during the war in Galicia, where the names of Bishop Yevlogy and Skalon, the prefect of police imposed on Lwow,

became notorious. But it would be an error to believe that Little Russia suffered from special national disabilities. The repression of liberalism, the persecution of the Jews, that took place there, were common to the whole of Russia. Regarded as a national entity, the Ukraine is a legend or a dream.

From the point of view, however, of the Austro-Germans, with one eye fixed on the Caucasus and Persia, the Ukrainian possibilities were not to be neglected. While in Galicia every manifestation of a leaning towards Russia, the natural parent of forty per cent. of the population, was severely punished by an active police, and the very possession of works by Pushkin and Turgenev served as a cause for imprisonment, at Kiev a separatist movement was artificially fostered and Russia represented as a brutal oppressor, trampling on the liberties of the children of Mazeppa. The various leavens of discontent were worked up into an inchoate party termed Mazeppists, in whose ranks the influence of the Austrian "orientalism," common among the Galician Poles, was plainly visible. The Mazeppists were inevitably against a war, the successful issue of which must draw closer together the races of the Russian empire and by liberalising its institutions remove still further the shadow of particular grievances in Little Russia. Thus while in the north the pro-Germans were the reactionaries, who hated freedom, in the south they were the nationalists, who professed to serve at its altar. If it is considered that

Kiev was a focus also of Polish and of Jewish interest, it will be seen that the enemy had a fine water in which to fish, and by the summer of 1915 it was already seething with trouble. With the revolution, the scum soon burst. The Mazeppists, loudly proclaiming their pure national principles, were encouraged by the Government of Kerensky and Tereshchenko to abandon as quickly as possible the advantages that gave Kiev its right to be called " the mother of the cities of Russia." Absurd claims were put forward, as, for instance, to include Odessa in the Ukraine. " Ukrainianisation " proceeded apace throughout the south, to the disgust of large classes of the population. Anyone who objected was marked as a counter-revolutionary. Schoolmasters, not of Ukrainian extraction, were ejected in favour of such as could talk Little Russian, but as there are few books printed in that language and it is useless in business or for the general purposes of life outside the Ukrainian provinces and hardly more useful in them, these steps aroused little enthusiasm. Articles in Ukrainophil papers published in Kiev, denouncing the use of the Russian tongue, lost their sting by being themselves written in Russian, since the Ukrainian language did not count enough adepts to support a newspaper. Even in 1918 lectures at the university of Kiev were delivered in Russian, and Russian remains the language in common use, despite the efforts of successive local governments to compel that of " Ukrainian " and the adoption of the latter as

the official tongue in Government institutions. In the primary schools, parents refused to allow their children to be taught in Ukrainian, and the attempt to force it on them had to be abandoned. Nor was the attempt to impose it in the provincial courts more successful, since neither judges, lawyers, nor clients were conversant with it. By this it may be seen that the opposition to Russian in the Ukraine is about as national as the Ukrainian paper money, which was printed at Leipzig.[1]

Far as matters had gone, so long, however, as the army remained even more or less in existence, the "General Secretariat," by which name the quasi-parliamentary government at Kiev was known, was powerless to act independently in foreign affairs. The catastrophe of Tarnopol, engineered by the Bolsheviks and constituting a direct threat to Kiev, was in part corrected by the energy of General Kornilov; but when, under the inspiration of Nekrasov and the disloyal clique in his Ministry, Kerensky threw over Kornilov, the way was free for traitors to complete the rot that had already eaten deep into the organism of the army. Its destruction once achieved, by the October revolution and the demobilisation, the picture changed. The Bolsheviks having done their chief work for Germany, woke up to find that they had lost their hold on the south. The slaughter of over two thousand officers at

[1] The artificial Ukrainian propaganda was carried into Western Europe by a journal entitled *L'Ukraine*.

Kiev, the murder of the upright and godly Metropolitan, the indiscriminate massacre of the "bourgeois" at Sebastopol, the methods, in fact, of *Schrecklichkeit* borrowed from Germany, that had sufficed when hordes of armed workmen, backed by heavy guns, harried the cities of Little Russia, availed little when disciplined foreign troops came against them. The resistance offered by the "Conciliar" armies, as the highly-paid Prætorians of the "Council of the People's Commissioners" are styled, was either puerile or fictitious. Men who enlisted in order to get thirty roubles a day were none too anxious to risk their skins, while the Lettish Rifles, to whom it is said that a bonus of fifty thousand roubles a man was promised, were kept as a bodyguard to the Council in Moscow and Petrograd. The relative slowness of the German advance to the north and east, which in the spring of 1918 seized Harkov and crept onwards to Voronesh and Kursk, was due to their being occupied elsewhere, or to other considerations of convenience.

It was before Christmas, 1917, that the Ukrainian movement touched its apogee. The Governments of Prince Lvov and of Kerensky had been too weak, and the latter moreover unwilling, to control the separatist intrigue at Kiev, and the Bolsheviks, incensed at the rejection of their authority, had not yet quite succeeded in dissolving, by means of their powerful propaganda, the army of the south-western front, in

the face of which, if it stood up to them, their forces were impotent. The situation was extremely complicated. So long as the army was in being the Ukrainians could not split off from Russia on the Austrophil basis of their predilection, but were safe from being over-run by the Bolsheviks. The latter, unable to master the Ukraine, could still threaten it, and were protected against the summons of German troops to aid the new republic, denounced as "bourgeois" and capitalist by "the Workmen's and Peasants' Government" in Petrograd. After a short period, during which the General Secretariat lorded it with the majesty of a serious Government, the Bolsheviks destroyed the forces at the disposal of the Ukraine by ceaseless fomentation of class hatred; and this gave them the key to Kiev. But the process of which this was a part obliterated the front in its entirety, dissolved the barrier between the Ukraine and Austria, and laid open the Bolsheviks to the advance of real soldiers summoned thence, who promptly evicted them from Kiev and from all Little Russia.

The motives of the Bolsheviks were too mixed, and, it should be added, the intelligence of many of them too primitive, to allow of their success. They wanted at once to conclude a peace in favour of Germany, not to give independence to Finland, concerning whose rights they formerly made much noise, to keep the Ukraine for themselves, and to create a revolution in

Germany—to say nothing of England, whither Kerensky, too, was on the point of dispatching propagandist emissaries when overthrown by the Bolsheviks. The latter had not apparently reckoned with the possibility that the Ukrainians would step into the arms of Germany to save themselves from the social revolution offered them at the bayonet point by the Council. When this happened, the latter was powerless. This, at least, is the surface view. On the Council there were wheels within wheels. Its managers must not be assumed to have experienced the surprise they expressed at each fresh move of the German. They believed that they could not indefinitely maintain their position in Russia unless a general European revolution came to their aid, and as the Imperial German Government was resolute not to allow this to start at home, they accepted the directive of the Boche so as, in Lenin's phrase, to gain " a breathing space," after which further to prosecute their designs both within and without the land against capital and the educated classes. By attacking the latter with every means at their disposal and promising a heaven upon earth to workman and peasant as the result of their campaign, they attained a virtual dictatorship. Whatever orders they gave were taken for the precepts of Socialism. Thus capital punishment and a standing army, formerly anathema, became part of the new gospel. Unfortunately, as practised by its exponents, the latter was hardly to be

distinguished from a crowd of hooligans put into uniform, and the former from murder. While these measures were taken to bolster up the position of Lenin and Trotsky, the colossal defeats of Russia which they achieved in politics and battle came to the mass of her people through the prism of Socialism as efforts of a wicked international bourgeoisie to deprive them of what are called " the conquests of the revolution." The Bolsheviks could do no wrong, since whatever they did was justified by Socialist professions. Shingarov was murdered, Burtsev imprisoned, a palace prepared for Count Mirbach, Skobelev's statue destroyed: the Bolshevik popes remained infallible. The game they played on the front and in Finland gave the enemy all the heavy guns imported into Russia by the Allies, disarmed part of the Baltic fleet, compelled British submarines in Finnish harbours to be blown up, and enabled the Germans to loose a million men on our front in France, all without the expression of the least regret on the part of Russian " Comrades." Yet the wrath of the rank and file among the Bolsheviks at the loss of the Ukraine may be thought to have been genuine. They cared nothing indeed that Germany had access to an almost inexhaustible source of supplies: they were too well parroted to the disadvantage of England, and too ignorant of political and economic science, to apprehend what fatal results might fall on Russia; but they cared much that they were cut off from the fount of

plenty themselves. Petrograd, Moscow, and the northern governments could now no longer receive food from the South. They lost the corn, butter, tobacco and sugar of the Ukraine, fish and fruit from the Crimea, wine, olives, fruit and petroleum from the Caucasus, and when Krasnov's government, in touch with the Germans, took control further to the east, the corn, coal and iron of the Don. Since then, and until the criminal collapse of the French expedition at Odessa, they have had to rely on ports of the governments of Kursk and Voronesh, on Tambov, Orel, and the Volga, and though this would have been amply sufficient to feed the north, crippled transport and the Bolsheviks' own system of starvation have prevented the produce obtained thence from being utilised for the benefit of the people. Moscow and Petrograd lost the whole of their southern market for manufactures. The industrial crisis, already acute, owing to stoppage of work in the factories, became rapidly exasperated, and every succeeding month showed with greater clearness that the Bolsheviks' criminality was only equalled by their ineptitude. From us they can claim neither sympathy nor respect. Their hands are stained with innocent blood, their hearts are black with treachery. They have reduced a country, great in potentiality, to anarchy. They have established a tyranny without example in modern history, since the goal of it is not patriotism, but its reverse. At the dictation of agents sent by the national enemy, they

have not hesitated to sacrifice the honour and the security of Russia to a selfish class ideal which is the negation of the liberty that the revolution was made to achieve. There may among them be sincere dreamers of a social Utopia, but the majority of their managers are base adventurers or frankly brigands. Many are mere callow youths or schoolboys. They are greedy, corrupt, idle, ignorant, full of brutality and vanity, and signally incompetent.

It is characteristic of the Germans' work in Russia that they did not rely on one means alone, but proceeded from both ends of the political scale at once. Thus under the old *régime* they intrigued through the Suhomlinovs, Stürmers, and Protopopovs, to detach Russia from her Allies and to stalemate the war, and at the same time through sections of the Social Democratic Party to overthrow the monarchy, foreseeing that with it the war and the military organisation of the country could be represented in an odious light to the densely ignorant soldiery. After the revolution, while labouring indefatigably to this end in Russia itself, they proceeded to play a similar double part in Finland. Here their agents in the Baltic fleet, among the "Red Guards," and doubtless in higher spheres, did everything possible to outrage Finnish national sentiment and to provoke a collision, while from Germany arms and money poured into the country to withstand claims that were no less arrogant and were assuredly worse based than those of the autocracy.

Civil war resulting, the Germans stepped in and took control of the position. The same game was played in the Ukraine. On the one hand, the ideal of the Dictatorship of the Working Classes demanded that the new-born State be crushed which dared profess independence of the fashionable theories that progress is downwards and robbery an exercise of natural rights; on the other, Ukrainian politicians with industrious humility made ready their necks for the Austrian yoke. It was typical that among the officers murdered at Kiev by the Bolsheviks was General Ivanov, formerly commander-in-chief of the South-western Front, a man who might have been dangerous to the Germans. The Teuton success in the south was even more brilliant than in Finland. Their hold became firmly established in every direction, political, military and economic, and they encircled luckless Roumania in an unbreakable ring. The saying, "You cannot have it both ways," was evidently not made in Germany.

The fitful information that filtered across frontiers left intentionally undefined by the Germans showed that the Ukraine early began to suffer from a severe reaction caused by the pricking of the bubble. There is among the people a higher sense of patriotism than is common with the Great Russians, due perhaps in part to a more direct dislike of the enemy. He was always nearer to them. His brutality to their brothers in Galicia was intimately known through the sufferings

recounted by the refugees. Kiev, too, their capital, was the base of the South-western Front, the starting point for the troops, the clearing point for wounded and prisoners, all living evidences of the activity of the war; and the war on the south-west was a successful war. The Little Russians could share to the full in the victories of Brusilov and Radko Dmitriev, and knew from eye-witnesses that their failures were not due to their own fault. Their sense of pride was not sufficient to prevent the destruction of the front by the Bolsheviks any more than better discipline and education could ultimately save the Cossacks from the general poison; and, moreover, large numbers of Little Russian troops were serving on the more distant Western Front. But it was the basis of the opposition to the Bolsheviks, and the material on which the Austrophil politicians worked. The people of Little Russia soon found they had been deceived. They were promised that a revolution in Austria would quickly follow the peace negotiations: they were forced to realise that the prospect of peace with Russia and of food from the Ukraine was, in fact, the chief weapon used to prevent a revolution. They were promised that thirty thousand troops should come to their assistance against the Bolsheviks: they found that a vastly stronger garrison held the country, and that the Austrian troops first sent were replaced by Germans whose officers ruled the roost in Kiev with the usual chivalry of their kind.

No word was said of the exaction of supplies; but the peasants discovered that they must produce a stated quota of corn or have their villages bombarded by German artillery. A peasant congress at Elizabethgrad was informed that the Ukraine, in return for German help, had promised to supply their new friends with twenty-four billion pounds of flour, a milliard eggs, eighty million pounds of sugar, and 1,300,000 head of cattle before August 1, 1918. The Black Sea commercial fleet and the imprisoned enemy vessels fell to the conqueror as part of his booty, and the Ukraine, nominally extended to the sea, had access to the blue water only on sufferance. Small wonder that discontent grew apace with the results of a peace negotiated by a second-year student of the Kiev Polytechnic, and that the strongly anti-German clergy began to regain their shattered influence. Count André Szepticki, the Uniate Archbishop of Lwow, who after the Russian conquest of Galicia was sent into seclusion in a monastery to put a stop to his Austrophil intriguing, became a *persona grata* at Kiev; perhaps he now finds that he has backed the wrong horse.

But if the Ukraine had reason to regret a bargain struck by treachery and bullying, what must be said of our position? Germany gained a fount of supplies that could feed half the world, and despite difficulties and disappointments was soon getting a hundred trucks of food a day. Had she won the Ukraine earlier

she would have won the War, for the whole work of the British blockade would have been stultified. In the government of Voronesh alone there were estimated to be stored five and a-half billion pounds of flour in the summer of 1918. There are parts where the 1915 harvest is believed to be unused. Even as it was, Germany gained a respite that enabled her to launch her last offensive against us. It was a victory for her worth a dozen Rigas, for us a defeat more crushing than any we have suffered since Ticonderoga. It was none the less a defeat because it was our diplomacy that went under, not our arms.

The Allied diplomacy has been at fault in Russia since the moment before our going to war, when Sir George Buchanan's statement that Great Britain had no direct interests in the Balkans surprised Sazonov, and not him alone. Though, with intervals of lucidity, we have throughout used the wrong means, trusted the wrong people, patronised the wrong parties. Our representatives praised Protopopov; and their anti-Semitic opinions, while not winning the favour of the reactionaries at Court, yet alienated valuable sections of Russian society. They supported Gorky, who used the money he obtained to ruin the Allied cause in Russia. After the revolution, American money backed the newspaper of Breshko-Breshkovskaya, "the grandmother of the revolution," who, herself a simple-minded idealist, was made use of by Kerensky's party and kept by him as a sort of fetish in the Winter

Palace. The British Government sent Aladin, known to Russians as a Socialist of remarkably vacillating views, on a mysterious errand to the Russian General Headquarters. But the culminating blunders were when the Allies made protest, equally solemn and feeble, against the Bolshevik conclusion of an armistice, and when the French Government decided to give money and moral support to the Ukraine. On the former occasion, it was represented to the French Embassy from a highly competent source that the Allies had before them two alternatives compatible with the policy of the War. Either they might say to Russia: "We know you cannot continue to fight. Make peace on terms favourable to yourselves; we voluntarily release you from engagements that have become too onerous for you to fulfil, but on one condition, that you shall not help the Germans. And as a guarantee two Allied army corps shall watch our interests with you." Thus they would have put Germany in a tight corner and rendered impossible the continuation of the anti-Ally campaign conducted by the Socialists on the ground that Russia was being dragged at the blood-stained wheels of the French and British chariots. Or they might immediately and strenuously act by force, from Archangel, Murman, and Vladivostok, when they would have been received with enthusiasm by a large body of Russian public opinion and might have succeeded in restoring the balance of the War on the Eastern Front. This repre-

sentation was entirely just. In the event, the Allies adopted neither course, but made a protest loud in words, which, not being backed up by action, received the treatment of every empty boast and contributed to the murder of the luckless General Duhonin. The blunder of supporting the Ukrainian Government was surprising, because the French have at times shown a better comprehension of Russia than ourselves. It was the more inexcusable, because the main facts of the Ukrainian situation were well known and Russian patriots of unquestioned ability were at hand with information. But they were neglected, just as the warnings of competent Russian observers against the Bulgarian designs were neglected in 1915. The result was a further blow to the Allies' prestige, a fresh revelation of their incapacity to gauge events, and a position in which it was possible for German agents to spread the belief that British officers were advancing with the German and Ukrainian troops to put down the Government of the Council.

CHAPTER V

COMMUNISM IN PRACTICE

What is a communist? One who is willing to put down his penny and take up your shilling.

So runs the old jingle, the truth of which is brilliantly exemplified by the development of events in Russia, with the exception that the Russian "Comrade," while taking up as many roubles as he can cram into his pocket, is resolute not to put down a single kopeck of his own. "La propriété, c'est le vol," gaily remarks Proudhon. The axiom has been bettered by the Neo-Israelitish Government imposed from Germany on the chief among Slavonic nations to mean that former proprietors may rightfully be robbed, but that the thieves shall maintain the transfer by the best argument possible—a repeating rifle perpetually at the ready. *Tuum* in their theory has been abolished, but *meum* is more strongly entrenched than ever, according to

> The good old rule, the ancient plan,
> That they shall take who have the power
> And he shall keep who can.

Rifles are made to kill, say the instructions to the Red Army. Always have your rifle, or at least your revolver, with you and be ready to use it on the moment. Shoot to kill. Never shoot unless you mean to kill. On such simple principles is latter-day Russian Communism based.

Communism in this new sense of the word may be said to have had its full chance in practice from the time of the murder of Count Mirbach at Moscow. It was then seen that the Bolsheviks, who had before that begun to call themselves the Communist Party, had no rival and could do as they pleased. They had no rival, not because their support among the nation was widespread or genuine, but because the only other party that had up to that time retained any pretension to existence, the Left Social Revolutionaries, showed that they neither had the moral stamina, nor controlled the physical force, further to carry on competition. The Bolsheviks feared the Left S.R.'s, as they were called, because it was believed that the latter could count on substantial support among the troops. Their old exploits, moreover, in killing the Tsar's Ministers were remembered and supported a belief in their possessing large powers of secret organisation. There was friction, but fear of consequences prevented an open breach between the two parties. Matters might have gone on so indefinitely, had not the Left

S.R.'s themselves precipitated the crisis by assassinating the German Ambassador.

This was an open challenge to the Bolsheviks. It was taken up at once by Trotsky, who declared that the murder was directed, not against Mirbach's Government, but against the existing *régime* in Russia.

That the Germans practically owned the Conciliar Government was notorious, and to observers on the spot has only been illustrated by the publication of "The German Bolshevik Conspiracy" by the American Committee on Public Information.

The documents obtained by Mr. Sisson were not needed to prove a fact already patent. It will be a problem for historians to solve how the British and some of the American representatives in Moscow came in the earlier part of the summer of 1918 warmly to favour the Bolsheviks and tried to obtain the recognition of their Government by the Allies as legitimate; Colonel Robins, of the American Red Cross, was especially ardent in this respect; but the Left S.R.'s, who had every reason to know, cherished no illusions as to the origin and policy of their leaders in the coach-team. They themselves deserved but little sympathy from civilised Europe, for they too were usurpers and murderers; but at least they stopped short of the complete treason to Russia that was the guiding star of Bolshevism. They contained a smaller Jewish element than the Social Democratic

Party, and especially the Bolshevik wing of it. They were still lit by a hazy tradition of desire for the liberation of the people and the progress of the peasants. Deeply as they were implicated in the crimes of tyranny perpetrated by the Bolsheviks, from the beginning a largely preponderant force in the October revolution and the Conciliar Government, and stained with the blood of innumerable victims, especially in the south, where at Harkov Sablin and at Sebastopol Muraviev, their representatives, had raged with the fury of Attila, nevertheless they shrank from the logical consequences of the movement they had helped to start, and revolted when their dull minds perceived the abyss of shame and ruin before their country. The revolt only showed their feebleness. The Bolsheviks, too, had a moment of weakness, but the Left S.R.'s were incapable of seizing it. They were dispersed and destroyed without difficulty, Muraviev, the Commander-in-Chief of the Conciliar forces committed suicide, and in his place the Bolsheviks nominated a Lett named Vatsatis, on whom they could rely.

From that moment there has been no organised resistance to the Bolsheviks from within, for the reason that no one has had the possibility to organise. The railways, post, telegraph, telephone, the banks, all motor-cars and petrol, all arms and ammunition, the Press, and in the towns the food supply are in the hands of the Bolsheviks. Their power rests upon

the employment of the Lettish rifles, who, in addition to hating Russians, receive immense pay and privileges to ensure their fidelity. The Letts are reinforced by Magyar and Chinese battalions, while the artillery of the "Red Army" is largely under the direction of German officers. At the same time hordes of spies are employed to hunt down opponents of the Conciliar Power, as the Government is grandiloquently termed, and to nip in the bud any growing disturbance or to provoke it so that it may be dealt with before it is ripe. Spies of the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution, the mechanism for maintaining and spreading terror, receive a salary and ten per cent. of their victim's property. By such means the Russian nation has been reduced to a condition of complete subservience to the rule of a comparatively small number of men of almost exclusively Jewish extraction, aliens, that is, in blood, in education, in ideals, and supported by alien force. The extent to which this is generally recognised is shown by the common gibe in Petrograd: "Are you a Commissar or do you belong to the Orthodox religion?"

There have indeed been attempts to upset the Bolsheviks, of which the first and most formidable was the rising in the summer of 1918 at Yaroslavl on the Volga. This important movement, had it been properly supported by the Allies, must have been successful and would have cut short at a blow

the career of the Conciliar Government. It was afterwards believed in Moscow that the rising was prematurely precipitated by discovery of a "white guard" plot, but even allowing for this, its results might have been brilliant. Without support, it could hardly have prospered even had it been perfectly timed. The circumstances for a stroke were favourable. On the South Volga, the Czecho-Slovaks held Samara and Simbirsk. Kazan, as was afterwards proved, was ripe for a blow against the Bolsheviks. Nijni-Novgorod, it was known, would follow suit. The British were somewhere north of Kotlas and Velsk on the Archangel front; on the Murman line, we were south of Kem. The opposition on both was vague. The former was held by extremely weak Conciliar forces, and the latter was thrown into a state of dismay by the cutting of the communications between Vologda and Moscow. The slightest push from the north would have given us Kotlas, Vologda, and Viatka, with Petrozavodsk, and the line from Petrograd to Vologda to follow; Kazan and Nijni would have risen, the Czecho-Slovaks have freed Saratov; and the whole Volga with the vast countries northeast of Petrograd would have come back into loyalist hands, by which is meant those that were loyal to Russia and to her Allies, as opposed to the forces of Germany and anarchy. If the Germans had then occupied Petrograd and Moscow, as they could have done at a couple of days' notice,

the Bolsheviks would have been forced to disclose their hand and the issue have been defined; if not, Petrograd would certainly have had to be evacuated by the Bolsheviks, and a combined movement under good conditions could have been made against Moscow. By autumn, Bolshevism would have been dead.

Panic reigned in Moscow. It was reported at the Military Commissariat that Kotlas and Petrozavodsk had actually fallen, that the line between Petrograd and Vologda was cut, and the capture of Vologda and Viatka was momentarily expected. Fighting was heard of at Rostov—not on the Don, but near Yaroslavl, and there was a rising at Murom, half-way to Kazan; in three weeks, it was confidently believed, General Alexeiev would be in Moscow to take the supreme command of White Guards, Czecho-Slovaks, and the Volunteer Army. Twenty aeroplanes, it was said, had flown away from Moscow to meet and join him. Evacuation was hastily prepared. The commander of the Armoured Car Division approached the present writer, through a common acquaintance, with an offer to put all his cars at the service of the Allies when the advance guard should reach Moscow, in return for a promise merely to report that he had done so. The Reds are bad soldiers. During the fighting in Finland, a detachment of twelve hundred Germans came quietly by train into a town held by them, killed five

thousand, and took over ten thousand prisoner; while Annapa was taken by one officer with a detachment of sixty schoolboys and students, who then proceeded to hang over five hundred Bolsheviks. Only the Letts and the Germans would now show fight, and perhaps Moscow would not be defended seriously at all. It seemed that the Allies had but to walk in. History will relate why they did not. Meantime the reason must be presumed to have been that fatal indecision that has hampered their action at every critical move in the game and prolonged the War at least a year longer than was necessary. They made no move. The White Guards at Yaroslavl were not supported. The rising that had begun so promisingly came to a tragic end. Yaroslavl was seared with flame and drenched in blood.

In the town itself the fighting lasted ten days. The Whites, according to the statements of those who were there, began well and held their own gallantly against hugely superior forces brought against them. But they were fatally hampered at the outset by the failure of the Mensheviks to seize the railway station and line, as arranged. A survivor bitterly remarked that with their usual inefficiency they got up three hours late in the morning. The Bolsheviks were before them, and the Whites saw themselves thus cut off from reinforcements and supplies they had reckoned on from the surrounding countryside. Yet even so they put up a stiff fight.

The local *intelligentsia* did not take much part in the contest, regarding the attempt as doomed to failure; and the Whites only had three guns. But the Reds brought against them were lily-livered. It was not they who took the town, but the German prisoners of war under the command of their own officers, backed by heavy artillery. On the tenth day Yaroslavl was burning in fourteen separate places from incendiary shells flung into it, and the water main was cut. The Whites, some of their leaders escaping by river, surrendered into the protection of the German Consul, who willingly or unwillingly gave them up to the Bolsheviks. Then the educated classes of Yaroslavl had cause to regret their abstention from the fight. They might have helped to give the revolt a chance. As it was, they paid the piper without calling the tune. The infuriated victors refused to know any difference between active participants against them and mere onlookers. Whosoever is not for me, is against me, is the Bolsheviks' motto.

Out of every ten to be arrested, five were shot. Doctors, lawyers, priests, merchants were thus destroyed, but the greatest number of victims were among students and high-school boys, as though the Bolsheviks were determined to stamp out the rising generation of the "bourgeoisie." On the first day after the surrender, over a thousand were massacred. For three days this continued, but on the fourth an

order came from Moscow that executions without trial were to cease, and the tale diminished accordingly. Bolshevik trials may be no great guarantee, but at least they absorbed time. The killing continued in decreasing quantities for six weeks. About half the town had suffered severely from shell fire. Hunger succeeded. At one factory the workmen struck for food. A detachment came down with machine-guns and orders to shoot whoever did not work. On this the men resumed work and the Bolsheviks then sent in food for them. "He who does not work *for us*, neither shall he eat," is the new working man's charter, for only that labourer is worthy of his hire whose mind and efforts pursue the path marked out by authority of the Lamas of the Kremlin.

The capture and recapture of Kazan belong less to our story here than to that of the Czecho-Slovak movement, but there have been since last summer several other less known risings of purely peasant origin. While details are extremely difficult to obtain, it is admitted that there have been revolts in the governments of Tambov and Riazan and near Kostroma, besides a smaller S.R. attempt at Vitebsk; railway communication with Saratov was interrupted for some days in November owing to a similar cause, and Moscow was even proclaimed in a state of siege, so threatening did the danger appear. A little earlier a rising took place in the government

of Novgorod. About fifteen thousand men collected at Tixvin, a town between Petrograd and Vologda. They brought with them machine-guns and rifles, of which there are plenty in the villages, and each man had food for a week. But having arrived at Tixvin, there they stayed. There was no plan, no command, no organisation, no transport; and having consumed their food, the peasants went back to their homes. Then the Bolsheviks, who had bided their time, sent down two regiments of thorough-paced Communists and went through the surrounding villages, killing every man in whose possession arms were found. At the time when the army was demobilised, or rather destroyed, talk was rife of the arms in the peasants' possession; for many returning from the front brought with them rifles, ammunition, hand-grenades, and even machine-guns. But just as it was found that such weapons in the hands of guerillas only harassed but could not master the Germans in the Ukraine, so against the Bolsheviks they could not prevail without artillery, supply, organisation, and leadership. In the case of peasant revolts, each village can be dealt with separately and the rising put down piecemeal.

Russian peasant psychology, as it bears on questions of State, is simple. The peasant's realm is his village, and his interest in international matters, that is, those that affect the world beyond the confines of his village, vague. His main concern is to

have enough land to till so as to support himself and his family in comfort according to his standards of life, without having recourse to more intensive and difficult methods of agriculture than his father used before him. Long before the revolution the question of land redistribution was seen to be the most vital of Russia's social problems to be faced after the War. The peasant wanted land; he who had land already wanted more; and all wanted to be secured in their tenure of it. Now it must be remarked that sense of property in Russia was rudimentary. In Little Russia, now often called the Ukraine, and in the Baltic provinces, personal ownership of land existed, but in Great Russia land belonged solely to the village community, and the individual had only a passing interest in it common to all the members of his community. This system guaranteed a minimum return for labour, and a maximum development of sloth, ignorance, and apathy, since a man's well-tilled land might be taken from him and given to another, he thus losing the fruits of industry and perseverance. Only with the land reforms of Stolypin did a glimmering of what Arthur Young called "the magic of property" begin to illumine his darkness. Time, however, was too short, and the shock of Socialist propaganda struck Russia before the peasants had emerged from their primitive communal State. Thus immemorial tradition inclined them to a ready acceptance of communistic ideas, especially

when accompanied by a lavish distribution of German gifts in money and kind, and the profitable possibility of selling Russian guns to the enemy. Not until the results of Communism began to be seen in practice did their eyes open and their minds change.

These results are easy to relate. Landlords had been driven out and their houses burnt, probably on the same principle as a bear's lair is burnt out, the peasants believing that the landlord, like the bear, will not come back again to a haunt where fire has been. The great estates were broken up and the land passed into the hands of the peasants. But the process did not stop there. Peasants of ability and energy acquired more land and prospered, swelling the ranks of peasant proprietors, of whom there were already many, especially among the Kazan Tartars. These now found themselves looked askance at as capitalists. They were nicknamed "kulaki" or "fists," a term already in use and meaning hard-hearted, close-fisted fellows. "Committees of Poverty" were created to control and despoil them. So far from wanting Communism now, they desired to be established in possession of goods, many of which were stolen, and by no means relished being stolen from in turn. The peasant was Bolshevik so long as he could steal two cows from the man who had four, but when robbed of one of those two, quickly lost the ruddiness of his political views. For his life to be agreeable and useful, he requires certain

goods and provisions, as tea, sugar, tobacco, paraffin, matches, soap, needles, cotton-stuffs for his woman-kind, and agricultural implements for his work; and these cannot be had because importation has ceased, manufacture has broken down, and distribution been dislocated by the ignorant rage for "nationalising" all enterprise. The peasants are enormously rich in paper money; not in "Kerenkies," miserable little slips of twenty and forty roubles begun to be printed during the Ministry of that ill-starred juggler, Kerensky, but in good old notes struck before the revolution. It is not uncommon for them to have packets of notes to the value of 100,000 Rs. and more buried in hiding-places. It is therefore foolish to expect them willingly to sell their products for wretched scraps of paper printed by the million, to which no guarantee whatever attaches, especially at prices that would be unprofitable even if the money were good, and when they cannot buy what they require with money at all. They began to refuse to sell. Detachments of Red Guards were then sent into the country with orders to requisition food for the towns, or, as it often turned out, for themselves, and pay for it in "Kerenkies" at the prices fixed by decree; and the same right was given to every army commissar, with the additional privilege of printing as many notes as he wanted at the portable presses carried with him. The "food-army" totals some thirty thousand men. As might be expected,

resistance was met with, and when, in spite of all their efforts, the peasants saw themselves plundered and ill-treated, they adopted the simplest and most radical method of self-defence: they ceased to produce more than was required for their own needs. Butter and cheese are no longer made. Land is sown only to the extent of the peasants' own demands. What is over is used for barter with townspeople who have means of procuring goods, or grain can be distilled on the quiet into vodka. At Saratov, the centre of one of the richest corn-growing districts in the world, it was in December, 1918, hardly possible to buy bread for money, beyond the modicum sold by card, although the peasants' tea-houses were overflowing with it; but anyone with tobacco, paraffin, soap, or soda could obtain white bread in unlimited quantities. Doctors' services and rare, highly-prized medical orders for alcohol, were also being paid for in food. Money has, in fact, to a very large extent lost its value for the peasants, and a rude system of concealed barter taken its place.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the peasants have abandoned all faith in the communistic *régime*. In the summer they were anxiously asking for some legal document that would establish them in possession of their new property when a change came. By winter they were saying: "Give us a Tsar, even if he is a bear." The mobilisation was the last straw. They were told that the War

was over; that was why the army was broken up and peace made with the Germans. Now they are mobilised again and forced to fight for what is called their "socialistic fatherland." "We have lived long enough under the Jews," they cry. "If we must fight, let it be for a Tsar!" In view of the Bolsheviks' control of armaments and transport, such talk can lead to nothing, but it may be taken as a fact that the peasants generally will welcome relief from whatever quarter it comes. They want peace and order; they are said to be willing to pay for the land they have taken; and there will be difficulty in restraining them from indulging in extensive Jewish pogroms. The Bolshevik policy has reached its inevitable penultimate stage. By promising the peasants a millennium, the Bolsheviks turned them against the educated classes. Now the industrious, solid peasants are themselves similarly persecuted for the benefit of ne'er-do-wells. The fruits of Communism have come to be exclusively for those who deserve nothing of the community. By the Bolsheviks themselves the process is expressed differently, if with cynicism. "The Russian people has saved itself," said an Assistant People's Commissar. "But only the riff-raff are well off," he was answered. "What you call the riff-raff are seventy-five per cent. of the nation," the Bolshevik retorted. "I am afraid," said his interlocutor, "the hungry are not with you now." "Oh," he sneered, "you

mean the dissatisfied hungry. We don't care for them. They can do nothing against us." The last stage will be if by the dilatoriness and blindness of the Allied Governments the Bolsheviks are allowed to complete the fusion with beaten Germany that is already beginning. Should that succeed, Europe will be face to face with a Russia enslaved, educated classes, peasants, workmen and riff-raff alike, and brought under the yoke of German organisation, for the utter destruction of European culture and liberty.

Above the brutal reality of a despotism crushing the mechanism of civilisation out of the nation, and stopping its prosperity at the fountain head, is a gloss of taking phrases that no longer deceive anyone in Russia, but would appear to be still potent in some quarters abroad. Bolshevik Russia is described as "The Russian Federative Socialist Conciliar Republic," and the rulers as "The People's Commissars" or "The Workmen's and Peasants' Government." These fine words have no more relation to fact than the Germans' pretence that Belgium was about to make treacherous war upon them. They are a blind. There is no Republic, no Federation, and no Socialism, if Socialism means the public ownership of means of production and the control of government by the community. As for federation, it has never even been dreamed of. The Tartar republic formed in 1917 was destroyed by violence, and the Esthonians have to defend their autonomy

from an oppression they have once tasted. The Bolsheviks are unable to tolerate the least semblance of individual State life. Even the so-called "Northern Commune" of Petrograd and its surrounding districts, that kept up a vague existence of its own, has been destroyed (February, 1919) and brought back into the fold of uniform Sovietdom. Nor does a further inquiry show any better results.

The Councils or Sovieti are not elected in any sense known to respectable States. Lists of candidates are prepared beforehand and presented to be voted *en bloc* by the meetings of the factories or country districts. Anybody objecting or wishing to propose other candidates is browbeaten, bullied, and shouted down, or if the matter should go as far as organised opposition, Red Guards can be called in to suppress it. Besides, as voting is not by ballot, objectors can be noted and dealt with quietly afterwards. The Congress of Councils, as assembly of representatives from the latter which has now come together nine times and is represented as a sort of parliament, meets when summoned by the bosses of the machine, and sits for scarcely more than a few days. Its business is listening to speeches by the People's Commissars and endorsing their policy. Since its members are dependent for their salaries upon the Councils and the latter are amenable in a high degree to pressure from headquarters, it can be imagined how independent is their criticism. It has no legis-

lative authority nor any control over the executive, and is merely an ornament, if anything Bolshevik can be held to serve so elegant a purpose. The People's Commissars are not responsible to the Congress, and are uncontrolled by it or by anyone else. Originally self-nominated, they remain as they began, usurpers of the name and dignity of representatives of the people. The Central Executive Committee of the Councils of Workmen's, Peasants', and Red Army Men's Deputies is in its active relation towards the People's Commissars merely a consultative body, and executive only of their will. All important appointments are made by the Council of People's Commissars or by the small groups within it that deal in patronage as a ware that constitutes one of the surest of political weapons. These groups do not always agree with one another, but, like the good Israelite organisers that the Bolshevik bosses are, they understand the necessity of holding in the main together and presenting a united front to the enemy. So close a grip is kept over the distribution of jobs that, to obtain work even in non-political institutions like the post-office or the railways, the applicant must be provided with recommendations from two members of the Communist Party, who are themselves certified by cards issued by that party. The Bolsheviks' control over every department of life was by the end of 1918 so complete that there can hardly have been a single person earning a salary in Russia

who was not directly or indirectly under their thumb, so that, were it desirable, they could at a moment's notice get him discharged. Nor is it possible to blame those who serve the Bolsheviks. They do so against their will and with hearts of lead. They must either serve or starve.

The screw of economic necessity is one of the two chief means by which the Bolsheviks carry out the policy they have imposed on the country. The other is terror. Had anyone in the days of Nicolas II. suggested as possible such a measure of repression of public opinion and such a degree of privilege for the governing class as is openly preached and practised by the Bolsheviks, he would have been laughed to scorn for a dreamer of absurdities. And here, lest the picture should seem fantastic, let us call on an unimpeachable witness, Karl Zobelsohn, alias Radek, one of the chief executive agents of Bolshevik foreign policy, sometime member of the "Central College" for Foreign Affairs, and the most brilliant journalist of the party. "The order of the day is red terror," wrote Radek on September 6th in the Moscow official *News* or *Izvestiya*, in an article lauding the *moderation* of the Bolsheviks. "The question is placed squarely before the popular masses by the murder of our Comrade Uritsky and the attempt on Comrade Lenin's life. . . . The Conciliar Government is against the aimless and needless shedding of blood, even of its foes, and has set itself counter to the

heart-cry of blood for blood! Now it has taken in its hand the sword of red terror, because red terror is imperatively dictated by circumstances." Yet "the destruction of particular individuals among the bourgeoisie, in so far as they have taken immediate part in the White Guard movement, has only importance as a means of spreading fear at the actual moment of encounter, in answer to the attempt on the life of one of our Comrades. It is obvious that for every Conciliar partisan, for every leader of the workman's revolution who falls at the hands of agents of counter-revolution, the latter will pay with scores of heads." And so it was. On the day following the attack on Lenin, six hundred and twelve hostages, perfectly innocent of participation in the deed, were shot in Moscow. For the assassination of Uritsky four hundred and thirty-six were shot at Fort Ino at Cronstadt alone after digging their own graves, and in Petrograd over a thousand. Nor was this the whole tale. Many prisoners were dispatched from Petrograd in barges and drowned. Many more were shot in various commissariats by orders of the so-called "revolutionary troika," a committee of three attached to each commissariat, who by their simple vote could send any person in the district lock-up to death. Throughout the country, local Commissions for Combating Counter-revolution vied with the more celebrated murderers of the capitals and executed officers, priests, town notables, students, and

journalists in great numbers. But this was not enough for Radek's appetite. "These means," he continued, "of mass red terror are only means of prophylaxy, means, so to say, of a police character. The centre of gravity of the red terror lies in a different plane; we must take from the bourgeoisie the means that serve in their hands as weapons in the struggle. . . . It is inadmissible that in hungry Moscow smart restaurants should exist where dinner costs hundreds of roubles; inadmissible that the bourgeoisie should swagger in valuable fur coats, while in the workmen's quarters the workmen, and at the front the Red Army men, freeze. We must take from the bourgeoisie everything we possibly can so that the Red Army may be fed and clothed and booted." Not the bourgeois, it should be noted, in fact, ran up dinner-bills for hundreds of roubles, but corrupt commissars and sailors, whose pockets bulged with "Kerenkies"; and Trotsky was a frequent visitor at Yar's, the smartest and most expensive of all the restaurants in Moscow. Radek demanded, further, that executions and confiscations should be carried out, not by special tribunals for the purpose, but at the dictation of the masses—lynch law, in fact, applied to property as well as to persons. "Five hostages taken from the bourgeoisie, and shot by sentence of the executive committee of the local Council of Workmen's, Peasants' and Red Army Men's Deputies, shot in the presence of thousands of

workmen approving the act; this would be a stronger act of mass red terror than the execution of five hundred by decree of the Extraordinary Commission without the workmen's presence. Tear from the bourgeoisie their money, warm clothes, everything that is not an object of prime necessity, by means of organised detachments of tens of thousands of workmen, and you will cause them better to feel the powerful will of the working class in defence of the Conciliar Power, than the most ruthless reprisals by special engines of Governmental terror. . . . Let the red sword of mass terror be raised, and let it fall without mercy."

This, in all its naked frankness, is the Communist policy of the Bolsheviks: by means of force, and again of force, and always of force, to take from him that has all that he has, even that which he has not, to give it to those that had not, and from them in turn to take away that which has just been given unto them. Moral, mental, and material superiority must alike be destroyed. All must be reduced to a dead level of dirt, discomfort, and degradation. And such indeed is the state of Russia. The Bolsheviks take credit to themselves for having suppressed the anarchy that marked the winter of 1917 and spring of 1918. But it was themselves who first created anarchy. Nor have they suppressed, but only controlled and organised it. People are no longer murdered in the streets, but are shot in commissariats

and by Extraordinary Commissions. Flats are no longer rifled, or at least more rarely, by bands of armed ruffians, but are requisitioned in the name of authority, and furniture and valuables carried out to be sold at auction. The Bolsheviks have rendered private murder and robbery unnecessary by nationalising them and giving their excitement to those who choose to enlist under the Bolshevik banner. Rank, piety, eminence, patriotism are but so many claims to martyrdom. Eleven bishops have been shot, seventeen members of the ex-Imperial family, brilliant journalists like Menshikov, noble women like Bochkarova, a girl of simple birth who fought throughout the War as a volunteer and raised the pitifully brave and tragic Women's Battalion in the year of the revolution. Of the heroes of the War, Russky, Radko, Dmitriev, Admiral Schastny, the sailor Batkin have been shot, Kaledin driven to suicide, Alexeiev and Kornilov to death by disease and shell, Brusilov badly wounded.

An odious poster was printed and stuck up at railway stations and in public places all over Russia, representing a ravenous priest, a bloated peasant merchant, and between them a vile caricature of the dead Emperor, his crown toppling in crazy intoxication. Underneath ran the legend: "Pop, Tsar, and Kulak"—Priest, Emperor, and close-fisted fellow—with abusive lines following. As this was shortly after the murder of Nicolas II. and in the middle

of the persecution of the Church and of the landed peasantry, the degree of decency of feeling may be judged. Nor did Russians alone suffer. In this orgy of crime and vulgarity their Allies could not escape notice. The French consular officials in Moscow, who were not tarred with the sympathy for Bolshevism that perhaps saved their British colleagues from a like fate, were flung into prison and forced to clean the latrines of the Red Guards. The subject may not be nice, but in order to make the nature of this task understood, it must be remarked that Russians of the uneducated classes are in the habit of standing on the seat; at provincial railway stations and in second-class hotels a wooden framework is erected to make this impossible; but where such does not exist the degree of filth is unimaginable. In the prisons the work of the French was so sickening that they were unable to eat afterwards, the more so as the food provided was rotten and maggoty. Sickness broke out among them, and there were cases of typhus and of death.

At the same time, the Bolsheviks' relations with the Germans were the best. It was "Comrade Blücher" who earned the special thanks of the Conciliar Government by the work of his detachment against the Czecho-Slovaks; perhaps we may learn some day what rank in the German Army this Blücher had held. There were Germans at the taking of Orenburg, where the Russian commanders were

three notorious criminals. They brought with them a contingent of prostitutes and for three nights made revelry at the principal hotel, keeping the servants on their feet the whole time under threat of shooting. The latter, who with the usual stupid insolence of uneducated provincial Russians, had reviled the bourgeoisie and acclaimed the Conciliar troops as harbingers of a life of glorious sloth, veered round in their opinions and swore that Communism was nothing but a devilish deceit. In the daytime the conquering brigands did their work of slaughter. The corpses were piled in heaps. Thither the widows of the slain were permitted to go to hunt for their husbands' bodies, but not to bring cart, barrow, or stretcher; and the spectacle was seen of women carrying home corpses on their backs, head downwards, with the legs over the bearers' shoulders. But the greatest service rendered by the Germans was at Pskov. Here the Russian volunteer Northern Army was stationed, in reality, despite the name, a small force of motley detachments, largely composed of officers. Previous to evacuating the town according to the terms of their armistice with the Allies, the Germans promised every assistance to the Russians, offered them arms, ammunition, and support against the Bolsheviks, and facilitated the passage of Russian officers from Finland to swell their numbers. The Bolsheviks came on, but the Russians were confident; they held the centre and

one wing, while the Germans were on the other, and their engineers had connected the wire entanglements with a powerful current from the electric light station. The attack was delivered; the Germans, only then revealing their treachery, switched off the current, extinguishing, moreover, the lights in the town, retreated from their position and attacked the Russian officers' battalion, three thousand strong, in the rear. All was confusion. The Russians, who further discovered that the German machine-guns were jamming, had to abandon Pskov, and retreated in disorder, leaving a number of prisoners and all their slender stores to the Bolshevik. Then came the most horrible part of all. The captured officers, to a number variously given as between a hundred and fifty and eight hundred, were handed over to Chinese torturers in the pay of the Bolsheviks, and, it is reported, were sawn asunder. Yet if for such perfidy the name of German deserves to be branded with endless shame, what must be said of the light-heartedness of the Allies in compelling Germany to evacuate the occupied provinces of Russia, without a thought for the loyal Russians defending their country against hordes of brigands, the foes of European order and most of all of the name of England? The Bolsheviks were not ungrateful for German assistance. In the middle of November, while Petrograd and Moscow starved, they were rushing trains with flour to the west " for the comrades battling for

the dictatorship of the proletariat in Germany." And three weeks before, the remainder of the Russian gold reserve, it was reported, had been shipped off via Riga to Berlin.

"My paradise is on earth. It is lit by electricity and full of rich tapestries and carpets and furniture. Enter, O ye unclean, and take it all!" These are the words of Jesus, according to the Bolshevik evangelist Maikovsky, whose "Mystery-Bouffé" was produced in Petrograd with great pomp to celebrate the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. Christianity is at a discount in Conciliar Russia. While nominally all creeds are tolerated, in fact that of the Orthodox Church is given as little breathing-space as possible. Religious teaching has, of course, been removed from the schools in company with French and Latin (but German has been made compulsory); priests are compelled to do the roughest labourers' work, sacred images have been taken down from all public places, as railway stations, where the little chapels formed a pleasant spot of colour and interest, and their possession in private houses is even said to have been made the subject of a tax by some councils; the reading of the Bible in prisons is prohibited as being a "counter-revolutionary" book; but when the Gospel can be twisted to advocate robbery, we see that its aid will not be disdained. Maikovsky's fatuity, too trivial to be called blasphemous, was rivalled by posters of immense size

designed for the celebrations and displayed at street corners. Some were cubist, some futurist; few were executed with any regard to accuracy of drawing, and most were sickly in colour. The subjects were various and symbolical; the most striking of all, perhaps, the representation, somewhat in the style of Guido Reni, of two smiths at work to whom, through a hole in massive clouds, the figure of Karl Marx clad in a toga hands from on high a copy of "Das Kapital" bound appropriately in red, while an angelic trumpeter places a wreath on his brow. To take part in the rejoicings, "the poor" of numerous villages were brought to Petrograd, and given free food, lodgings, and passes to the theatre. These "poor," who were substantially dressed and a hundred times better fed than the once well-to-do of the capital, were too cunning to be caught with such salt, and openly declared that they would not give the Communists more of their products than could be helped. Meanwhile they were not averse to seeing the sights. Thirty millions had been allotted to the anniversary decorations in Petrograd, but if Petrograd got the worth of a tenth part of that sum, it must be considered lucky. The rest evaporated on the way into diverse pockets. Never were decorations so skimpy. Many were the old May-Day banners, violent puzzles in crimson and black, now somewhat fly-blown. The new efforts were beneath contempt, and the illuminations at night unworthy of a seaside subscription

dance. It was for this occasion that the head of Lassalle, a blend, according to the sculptor, of Jew and negro, was set up in front of the town hall, which was renamed "Lassalle's House," while "Uritzky Street," "Revolution Place," "Liebknecht Avenue," etc., were to shoulder out the historic street names of Petrograd. The attempt was an utter failure; and, despite the threat of heavy fines, cabmen, tramway conductors, and public refused to recognise "Nahamkis Prospect" at the bidding of Zinoviev-Apfelbaum. On the first day of the jubilation, processions dragged along the main streets laboriously, their eyes fixed on the ground. They were a sorry sight and of far less interest than the way they had been collected. Schools, in the first place, were sent out, under threat that all truants' lunch would be stopped for a week; then sailors were brought up from Cronstadt, and they were simply told that they would be shot if they did not go; finally, workmen, each of whom had been marked down through his house-committee and would be deprived of bread if he failed to attend. At night crowds of the country "poor" and townspeople, curious to see if anything would happen, drifted about in silence; there was no enthusiasm, nor indeed emotion of any kind. For what was being celebrated? Hunger and the beginning of the agony of Petrograd. The city was like John Leech's pictures of servants carousing in the drawing-room

during their master's absence. Festivity, to be successful, must have some reason. The reason for the Bolsheviks' *fête* was that they had turned out the educated classes. But having done so, they were unable to do anything further. Another reason, indeed, could be spied in the sonorous articles that poured from communal pens. The Bolsheviks seemed surprised to find themselves still in power. And well they might be. They knew better than any how easily they might have been overthrown and how richly they deserved it. Voznessensky, the director of the Eastern department of the Bolshevik Foreign Office, who was usually deputed for such missions by reason of his thorough knowledge of English, had in the summer frankly told the American Ambassador at Vologda that if the Allies wished they could put down the Conciliar Government almost without a blow, but the longer they waited the more difficult the task would become; therefore it behoved them to settle a definite policy one way or the other. It must have seemed a dream that the Entente should suffer the continuance in power of their bitterest foes who were preparing a campaign to destroy social order in England and France, and already were training bands of agitators to create a revolution in India. "The English are our chief enemies," said a well-known Bolshevik doctor; "not enemies exactly, but their pride stands in our way. Once they are beaten we shall be the first people in the world. In

March we shall make a revolution in India, and that will be the beginning of the end for them." The Bolsheviks had expected a far shorter shrift than a year, and when the anniversary came and went looked at each other with doubting eyes, scarcely able to believe their good fortune.

Meanwhile, the Communists had sun by which to make hay. As the lapse of time showed that no one interefered with them, their grip over individual and social life became tighter. "House-committees of poverty" had now taken the place of the old house-committees that were the last remnant of free organisation in Petrograd. Their intention was to oppress the middle-class tenants in favour of workmen, always understanding by workmen those who were members of the Communist Party as alone worthy of consideration. The plan was not completely successful, since in practice the dvornik or house porter was bound to have great influence on his "committee of poverty," and the dvorniki, besides knowing from whom tips could be expected, to a man looked forward to a change in the State, which would make them once more dependent on proprietors and tenants. Better results attended the "crowding up" campaign. Despite the fact that the population of Petrograd had sunk from between two and three to under one million, it was declared that to relieve the housing congestion, the flats of "bourgeois" were to be "crowded up." No more

than one room per person, including dining-room and kitchen, was to be allowed, and a maximum of cubic feet was fixed so that a large room must be occupied by at least two. If there were not enough in the family, Red Army men or sailors were sent in to occupy the spare rooms. Flats left empty by their tenants were seized and all their contents carried off. Innumerable Conciliar institutions, multiplying like mice, invaded separate houses and many of the best blocks of flats. Dodges of every kind were resorted to by way of evasion; a well-known former newspaper proprietor, for instance, founding and supporting a Jewish university in his drawing-room, many managing to inscribe themselves in two or more places of residence. The whole *intelligentsia* was registered for the purpose of so-called social work, which might mean anything from grave-digging to needlework for the Red Army. In Moscow and other towns, elderly ladies and infirm gentlemen were set to remove the snow from the street after an exceptionally heavy fall, while sturdy young ruffians looked on and delightedly mocked them. In towns near the front, a policy was adopted towards the educated classes similar to that of the old *régime* towards the Jews in 1915: they were simply turned out of their homes to fend for themselves as best they could, with the added hardship of being forbidden to sell their goods, which frequently had to be parted with "under the rose" at low prices. Thus, at

Saratov, much overcrowded by fugitives from the famine in Moscow and Petrograd, the entire centre of the town was emptied of the "bourgeoisie," the houses frequently not being used at all, while their former owners and tenants were driven into cramped and inhospitable lodgings, often sleeping in passages for want of room. In one case, by no means rare, a family of eleven were sleeping in four rooms and taking their meals in the corridor—and of these one was a doctor, attached to the town hospital, with the right to two rooms: without his privileges the accommodation would have been still worse. While inhabitants were in such straits for room, the three largest hotels, requisitioned by the Bolsheviks, were kept standing completely empty. At the same time thousands of refugees from various scenes of fighting, and persons cut off from their homes by the break-down of railway and river transport, were camping out on the banks of the Volga, exposed to the weather, and without any provision for sanitation or a proper water-supply.

While Saratov had not so far been visited by an epidemic, typhus, smallpox, scurvy, and glanders were said to be raging in Central Russia, and apparently trustworthy reports came to hand of repeated cases where, instead of being taken to the already overflowing hospitals, themselves almost become mortuaries, sick persons were shot out of hand to save trouble. In Petrograd the death-rate became

appalling. Here smallpox, typhus, measles, and "Spanish" sickness claimed their thousands. Immense queues were formed at the cemeteries. A mother, burying her baby in November, counted eighty-one other infants' coffins awaiting burial. When it is remembered that compared with two months afterwards November was a time of plenty in Petrograd, the figure of eighty-two infant burials in one day at one cemetery gives a horrible gauge of the later mortality. In the light of this, the terrific figures given for December and January seem possible. On the authority of information obtained by the Russian Secret Service in Petrograd from the Commissariat of Statistics and supplied to General Yudenich's staff in Finland, eighty thousand people died in Petrograd in December and a hundred and twenty thousand in January. It was certainly believed in Petrograd that the population was declining by more than a hundred thousand a month, and at the end of March is estimated at hardly more than half a million. Corpses often waited to be buried for a fortnight or more. Coffins were hired at sixty roubles a trip, and, on being emptied, instantly returned for a fresh occupant. Many were buried without coffins, and almost without grave-cloths. The dead, far too numerous for individual burial, were interred in large common graves. Yet, while the population rapidly declined, the consumption of water in Petrograd rose to nearly four times what

it was in 1916, owing to the ruinous condition of many of the pipes and consequent wastage. And this though in many houses the water-supply has wholly ceased, and the tenants are forced to go to their neighbours for their every need.

By January, 1919, Communism had been pushed to what may be regarded as its normal extreme. Perhaps some further length may yet be invented, but up to that date, besides industry, commerce, the land, houses, and retail trade, dogs, cemeteries, and undertakers had been nationalised, and there had been several suggestions of making women from twenty to forty years public property also. At Saratov a scheme for enforced promiscuity had long ago been worked out, though no attempt appears to have been made to put it in practice. There, as well as in the two capitals, all shops had been shut except fruiterers, hairdressers, hat shops, toy shops, bicycle shops, and such minor businesses. To buy any article of clothing or food, fuel of any sort, boots, paper, or generally anything of utility or value, an order from the local council, only to be obtained after prolonged and harassing pertinacity in five or six different departments, must be forthcoming. The bookselling trade has been socialised, and only approved books can be sold. Even to enjoy the luxury of a Russian bath, formerly the most ordinary of comforts, an order from the council was necessary. Hotels are all shut, and furnished lodgings run by a

department of the Council. To take more than a modicum of luggage by railway permissions from four separate authorities have to be shown, and these will require at least as many days to procure. Electric light is supplied quite capriciously, on some days only to houses in blocks where there is a Conciliar institution. Even in the depth of winter, the streets were hardly lit at all. The trams run erratically for a few hours a day, and a ride costs a rouble. Postage stamps, once considered a *sine qua non* of civilised comfort, have now been abolished; all letters must be taken to the post office and handed across the counter, with the result that yet further immense delays take place in a service already crippled by bad habits, bad control, and adverse circumstances. Conciliar finance consists of the savage imposition of huge fines and contributions, which during the first half of 1918, a period of comparative moderation, were computed to have totalled over 900,000,000 Rs., ending at Petrograd in February with a sixty per cent. tax on all valuables.

Railways under Conciliar management can hardly be said to exist. Over sixty per cent. of the locomotives are out of service, and by this time probably a third of the total rolling-stock. By March the percentage of "sick" rolling-stock had undoubtedly much increased. Repairs cannot be undertaken for want of material, skilled work, and by reason of general idleness. Travelling has become a martyr-

dom. In the schools, where changes in the curriculum have already been noted, practically no work is done. A highly intelligent, willing lad of seventeen said that from August to January he had learnt nothing at all. This is due partly to the frequent changes of masters, who are exposed to denunciations from rivals, pupils with a grievance, or discontented house porters; for the schools are managed by committees consisting of the porters, boys, and masters. Partly also to the general absence of discipline; and partly to the boys being frequently employed to chop wood and do other similar labourers' jobs. Boys frequently do not attend for days running, without any notice being taken, and would seemingly not go to school at all were it not for the free lunch given, consisting of a plate of soup, a minute portion of bread, and a glass of tea; which makes a very serious addition to the day's food in Petrograd. They have free passes to the State and Communal theatres, with the object of swelling the miserable audiences there. In the high school from which these details are taken, a typical school of good reputation, a large amount of speculation goes on among the boys, one having the possibility of getting bread from the country, another potatoes or sweets from a mother in a supply committee, a third cigarettes through a brother in a commissariat. A brisk business is thus done, and the boys, who see nothing wrong in doing what they see done all around

them, become hard, avaricious traders and not infrequently swindlers.

When such deterioration is noticeable among the youth of the educated class, it is not surprising that lower down in the scale criminal instincts have spread and flourish to an alarming extent. The contraband markets that have sprung up everywhere have become an unexampled school for pickpockets. Nothing can be bought in the shops, but everything at known street corners, where, as dusk falls, huge crowds collect to chaffer and barter, swelled by thieves and prostitutes. At night the Nevsky Prospect, dirty, dark, and unkempt, that used to be one of the finest streets in Europe, presents an aspect truly infernal. Under the uncertain light of the rare arc lamps knots of loungers drift by, with coarse laughter and brutal quarrels. There are but two types represented—sailors and prostitutes, the latter all very young. These literally form the sole composition of the crowd. They exhale an odour of vice and murder that revolts and terrifies. Petrograd has indeed become a City of Dreadful Night. The lees of human life have boiled up to the surface in a loathsome scum, and swirl round, befouling all they touch. Nor is this only the impression of a foreigner. On February 4th, a letter signed "Communist" was printed in the *Northern Commune*, describing a charity entertainment two days before at the Little Theatre, in the form of a 'Cabaret.' "This Cabaret

consisted solely in the fact that there was an orchestra to which sailors and prostitutes danced. Nobody else was visible among the public. . . . It was horrible to watch these bought girls, among whom I saw very few over sixteen years old, but many of from ten to twelve years and even younger. It is time to prohibit such indecency and to have done with 'charities' that spread lewdness far and wide." In March, on an advertisement page in the *Northern Commune*, out of over two hundred professional advertisements counted there was not one that was not either of a cure for venereal disease, or of masseuses whose business is notoriously to assist illegitimate births or to procure abortions. Corruption permeates Communist society from top to bottom. Bribes are taken by almost all officials. Large sums change hands to obtain release from prison or relief from harsh treatment there. In one case last summer, 7,500 Rs. was paid to obtain the transfer of a prisoner from a commissariat, where it was known he would be shot, to the fortress of Peter and Paul; the money was paid to the cook at the commissariat, and the transfer was effected. Recently as much as 100,000 Rs. has been paid for the release of a prisoner from the Gorohovaya. Railway facilities also afford excellent opportunities for palm greasing, and it is said that Marie Andreeva, the Petrograd commissar of theatres, made two millions out of the transport of some trucks of fish

from Saratov. This Andreeva, who was a second-rate actress at the Art Theatre in Moscow, is Maxim Gorky's "civil" wife. She now has her exclusive motor-car, dresses exquisitely in days when the simplest costume costs a thousand roubles, and travels in a special coach, taking her own cook with her for the journey.

Theatres are kept open, the larger at a great loss, some of the smaller well filled by the efforts of actors really devoted to their work and seeing in it the only refuge in the general ruin. The Conciliar powers realise that were the theatres to close, the last fiction of civilised life would vanish; therefore, when the manager of the intellectual little music hall in Moscow, "The Bat," wished to shut his house and betake himself to his native south, he was forbidden and told that if he tried to leave his post he would be shot. Yet, though the word has gone forth that the people, in default of bread, shall have entertainments, the Bolsheviks can hardly be said to show great consideration to the art of drama, since performances are sometimes delayed for half an hour for the arrival of some Conciliar boss, and once at the Art Theatre at Moscow the actors were compelled to give the first act over again for the benefit of a Bolshevik grandee who came late. There is a strict censorship, and anything smacking of counter-revolution, as, for instance, Rostand's "L'Aiglon," is sternly forbidden. The cinema censorship commission,

too, is a fruitful spring of illicit wealth. There it is the custom to leave the film-owner alone in a room into which members of the commission put their heads, holding up as many fingers as they require thousands for their assent. A case has been quoted where production expenses were raised in this way from a hundred and twenty to a hundred and fifty-eight thousand roubles. Well might Lenin declare that bribery in Russia was universal. The only remedy, he said, would be publicly to shoot two hundred takers of bribes a week. It did not apparently occur to him that a surer way would be to unmuzzle the Press, abolish terror, and inaugurate representative government in which the people might gain control over administration.

Maxim Gorky's wife thus queens it over the theatres. Maxim Gorky himself, who contributed more than any single man to the rise of the Bolshevik power in Russia, and then for a while played Achilles in his tent, last summer came again into the open and was nominated member of the "Presidium" or chief committee of the Petrograd Council, where in company with Zinoviev and Lunacharsky he shares to the full the responsibility for the crimes of the Bolsheviks. His special pet is the Publication Commission, to which is given over the whole business of publication with a grant of many millions for the purpose. Books are now only issued by the State, at a fixed rate of payment per sheet to the author.

As new books of distinction are not forthcoming in great quantities, it was proposed to republish editions of standard Russian authors. At the head of the first list Gorky inscribed thirty of his own works. The Publication Commission is in reality to a large extent an engine for distributing hush money to literary persons who might on the quiet foment opinion against the Bolsheviks. Thus seven hundred thousand roubles was paid in October to a group of four young authors, ostensibly to start a new review, of which, however, nothing had been seen or heard by February. Meanwhile, Bolshevik agents abroad spread legends that Gorky is not really a Bolshevik; oh, no! The *real* Bolsheviks are Leonid Andreev, who prefers poverty in exile to the bloodstained laurels of Communism and has refused offers of hundreds of thousands from Gorky's Commission for the right to reprint his old works, and the painter Constantine Reerich, persecuted by the Germans for refusing to send an exhibition of his pictures, on remarkably handsome terms, to Munich, Dresden, and Berlin. The Bolshevik system of buying authors is not confined to the Russian article only; for a literary lady well known in England and possessing recommendations from the former British Ambassador at Petrograd, has been waiting for several months with a well-stocked purse to proceed hither on a search for translation rights—in other words, to bribe pens that might be driven to the Bolsheviks'

undoing. Fortunately for us, the Finnish Government will not *visée* her passport. Another legend was started to save Gorky's reputation from the odium of responsibility for the murder of the four Grand Dukes at the end of January, a crime of peculiarly cold-blooded and inexcusable cruelty. It was put about that Gorky, anxious to save them, had gone in person to Moscow to beg their lives, and had succeeded, and was bringing back the pardon with him, but was seized by a heart attack in the train, and so, being delayed, arrived too late. Not many persons, it is to be hoped, are so childish as to believe that, had this been the case, the reprieve would not have been sent by telephone or telegraph. Such inventions are but a proof of the Bolsheviks' own sense of insecurity and of their desire to snatch at any means of escape from the retribution they foresee awaiting them.

At the present time, money is perhaps the most important weapon in the arsenal of Bolshevism. While local and portable presses flood Russia with "Kerenkies," the State mint on the Fontanka Canal at Petrograd works day and night striking off notes of the old *régime*; that is to say, forging bank notes of old dates and old numbers. For some reason, the year 1909 is greatly favoured both for ten and for five hundred rouble notes. These are kept chiefly for export, since, however low the rouble falls, it is still worth more than the ink and paper required for

forgery. In banking circles in Petrograd, it was believed in January that two million roubles a month were allocated for propaganda in Finland, an allowance increased by a heavy special grant afterwards. In Germany, Russian money, as is known also from German sources, has been employed throughout for the Spartacist rebellion, and at the beginning of March information was received from Petrograd that 350 million roubles were being dispatched to the Fatherland. German banks in Helsingfors, doubtless under instructions from the astute diplomatists of the German Legation, aided in this work by demanding new " old " 500 Rs. notes from refugees arriving from Russia, and refusing to receive others. And when dealings in roubles were forbidden in Finland, the Bolshevik financiers only had to remove to Stockholm. The connection between Germany and Bolshevism, plain before to all unprejudiced observers, received further proof when Count Bassowitz, Mirbach's former Chargé d'Affaires at Moscow, received notice of expulsion from Finland in April on discovery of his complicity in the Red rebellion that was plotted for the following month. The Finnish Government further states that a large consignment of forged English bank notes was found in the luggage of the Swiss Socialists, Platten and Axebode, returning from Russia, and were confiscated. In these circumstances, the greatest blow against Germany and against the Bolsheviks would be to

send an aeroplane to bomb the mint at Petrograd. Then there would be an end of this insidious warfare, and the troublesome question of the Russian currency would at least be simplified.

Opponents of Allied intervention in Russia to put down the Bolsheviks often allege as arguments the difficulty of coping with the mighty Red Army, the immense force that would be required, and the impracticability of advancing into the limitless distances of Russia that swallowed up Napoleon and baffled Hindenburg. The reasoning is fallacious. No one is asked to conquer Russia. All that is proposed is to upset the Bolshevik Government, when Russia herself will do everything else that is necessary. Secondly, in the opinion of all who have observed the Red Army, a very moderate force from outside, if resolutely handled, would be enough to cope with it, because, thirdly, the Red Army is rotten, badly fed and equipped, and disloyal. The maximum claimed for the Red Army is 800,000; but, in fact, the total is believed to be not much more than half a million. Of this less than a quarter might be reliable opposed to seasoned troops, being composed of Lettish and some Magyar detachments and of the old, convinced Red Army men, who are Communists, if not by principle, at least by long practice. The fighting quality of the Chinese is doubtful. Those who used to be on guard in the streets in Moscow last year looked smart and intelligent, but may have

been picked men. They are understood to have Russian officers, but again it seems unknown whether these are "Red" officers or men of serious military training. "Red" officers, that is those produced by the military training colleges under Bolshevik rule, are, it is generally admitted, a failure, even as compared with the "war-time" officers of the later period, who had no very high reputation; genuine officers of the old school, however, and of the early part of the war, although forced to serve by the Bolsheviks, have no heart in the business, and may be counted on to do their least, even if they are unable to escape from bondage into the ranks of their deliverers. All officers up to forty-seven years are now pressed, and senior and staff officers to a considerably higher age. The difficulty of catching and keeping them may be judged from the fact that not only they, but their families and relations, being kept as hostages, are threatened with death should they attempt to desert; and this threat has in some cases been carried out. Even those who went into the Bolshevik service last year, with the exclusion of turncoat opportunists of the school of Kerensky's Minister of War, Verhovsky, almost exclusively did so as the only means open to them of procuring their daily bread. But the rank and file are not much more trustworthy. Desertion has reached significant proportions. When Trotsky visited the front at Saratov in September, not content with imprisoning

the chief notables of the town in barges on the Volga, so that they might be massacred were an attempt made on his life, he was accompanied at every step by an armoured car, a squadron of Lettish cavalry, and a cyclist detachment, and when he addressed the troops spoke from the armoured car with machine-guns trained on his audience. The equipment of the soldiers is various, their comfort but little, and their discipline dependent on the knowledge that they will be shot if they break. There are also many bands of ruffians and criminals whose heart is in the cause of Bolshevism, so long as they can rob, rape, and bully; their fighting value, however, against a well-equipped force must be small. Only in the artillery and the staff work where German officers are employed is anything like a respectable level attained, and German guns and material have already made their appearance and their weight felt on the southern front. The quality of the ordinary, pressed infantry may be judged from the following true story. At the time when a British detachment was rumoured to have arrived on the Narva front, Bolshevik troops were transferred from the Archangel front to meet the new menace. One battalion, arriving in Petrograd and learning its destination, sent a deputation to the military commissariat with the following message: "The battalion agrees to go to the Narva front, if the red tickets proving the men to be members of the Communist Party are taken away

and certificates are issued in their place that the men are not Communists." If captured with red tickets, the English would hang them, they said. The request was refused; on which the entire battalion broke up and proceeded to its various homes in the villages as best it could. From this it would seem that even the spoliation of the well-to-do to provide presents for the Red Army is not convincing in face of a possible encounter with a British advance; not even though on one occasion a descent was made on the opera house in Petrograd and all the jewels found on ladies there were confiscated for this purpose. Such incidents would seem not to be rare; for in January two companies on duty on the Finnish frontier bolted and the men quietly disappeared. The further agreeable incident was reported at the beginning of April. The Bolsheviks moved one of their best regiments from the Beloostrov to the Narva front. So far, so good. But when they came to transfer another regiment in its place from Narva to Beloostrov, it was found that the latter only existed on paper: the men had hanged their commissar and all gone home. Lenin on hearing this remarked in his caustic way that the Red Army were like radishes —red outside, but white at the core.

The Red Fleet is in an even more parlous state than the Red Army. If all the expert officers and men trained in technical branches from the remains of the Baltic Fleet that Admiral Schastny saved from

the Germans, only to be shot by the Bolsheviks for it, were concentrated, and the necessary minimum of coal obtained, it is believed that a fleet consisting of one or perhaps two battleships, one cruiser, and a few destroyers could be put into sea-going trim; but, even so, the engines and guns are in bad repair, and nothing like their proper speed could be expected of the ships; while the better the shooting, the less danger there would be to an Allied enemy fleet, since the gunnery officers, as they did once before, would certainly lay the guns wide. The sailors themselves are an uncertain quantity; at the end of October they made a demonstration in Petrograd in favour of free trade, but were pacified by their bread allowance being increased to 1½ lb. per day and by a bonus of 3,000 Rs. per man, and although such methods have succeeded so far in restraining them, this cupboard loyalty to the Bolsheviks would give under pressure of adverse circumstances. An officer, escaped from Cronstadt, gives as his opinion that the fortress would surrender if a single British destroyer made its appearance and fired one shot.

During the winter Petrograd has gone from bad to worse. Not to speak here of the hunger that preys upon men's minds and bodies, the fever of expectancy in which all live works ill results on health, and yet further reduces already shattered strength. The entire absence of trustworthy news and the unwillingness, nay, the impossibility, to believe that no one

is coming to the rescue of tortured Russia, creates an atmosphere in which legend grows like rank jungle weed. Thus on October 30th, Petrograd was full of rumours of Voronesh taken by the Cossacks, of Krasnov and his men by some miracle advancing from Pskov, and that Rybinsk had been taken by the Czecho-Slovaks. From mid-November onwards daily rumours whipped our sunken spirits with news that the British fleet was at Reval. On the 17th, it had come beyond all doubt and with it sixteen ships brimming with flour, and they would be in Petrograd for sure by December 10th. On the 21st, it was told from a number of positively informed sources that the Russian fleet at Cronstadt had raised the St. Andrew's flag, put to sea, and steamed off to join the Allies, after silencing Fort Ino in a three hours' engagement. On the 12th, Sweden was already reported on the verge of war with the Bolsheviks; on the 22nd, the Allied troops were in Finland and marching rapidly on Petrograd; in December, it was a British aeroplane that flew over the capital, dropping rolls of white bread, and there were people whose friends had themselves seen and eaten them. In January a British force was located on the Narva front, and both then and when the news came that our fleet was preparing to enter the Baltic Sea there were panics in the capital. The chief Bolsheviks, under pretence of conferences with the Moscow authorities, fled; many Conciliar institutions began

hurriedly to evacuate, and on the former occasion the entire Automobile Division was got ready for the road in three days, not to fight the British, but to run away from them. Neither Bolshevik nor anyone else knowing the facts doubts that a small force of good men, well equipped from a properly established base, could take Petrograd in a very short time; and the shock of the capture of Petrograd would probably disintegrate the whole Bolshevik machine and bring it smashing to the ground. The working classes of Petrograd, oppressed, hungry, drilled into line only by threat of cutting off their last food, have long lost any sympathy with Bolshevism. Work at the factories has become more and more irregular, owing to absence of raw material and fuel; more and more factories have been closed; the purchasing power of the paper money has gone down and down; and the stocks of all prime necessaries have grown less and less. On January 31st, fifty-three considerable factories were shut at one fell swoop, and at the Putilov works, where normally twenty and during the war forty thousand men were employed, there were but from two to three thousand working, and these only working half time. A few weeks later serious trouble broke out there and at other factories. Zinoviev and the Swiss Platten were refused a hearing, and the former, though President of the Petrograd Council, was insulted and dumped out of the works in a barrow. Rude jingles were inscribed on

the walls: "Down with Lenin and horseflesh! Long live the Tsar and pork!" At the great Treugolnik rubber factory, the women cried: "Long live Little Father Kolchak!" "little father" being a familiar title exclusively given to the Emperor. Workmen being arrested, strikes ensued, accompanied by violence; the Left S.R.'s, who had patched up a truce with the Bolsheviks, judged the moment good for a rising, issued a manifesto, and attempted to blow up the waterworks on the Petrograd side, north of the Neva. Several minor commissars were assassinated. The Bolsheviks, however, of whose faults indecision is not one, took their usual strong action; a number of workmen were shot, others removed, resolutions of detestation of the strikers were manufactured in other factory committees, the S.R.'s were denounced as traitors and bourgeois assassins, and the outward surface became calm again. Petrograd, indeed all Russia, is a beleaguered fortress. There is not a man of honour, nor one of intelligence, save blackguards who have sold themselves to the Bolsheviks, who has not the sensation of being besieged. But the peculiarity of this siege is that the assailing forces are within the fort, and, themselves enjoying plenty, are slowly starving the defenders to death.

"The revolution is lost," said Plehanov to a friend within a month of his return to Russia in the spring of 1917. "Russia must go back to the *régime* of the gendarme—no, to that of Nicolas I., to the gen-

darme with a double knout!" This patriotic Socialist foresaw even then the failure of the educated classes to organise, and, in view of their inefficiency, the success of brutality and treason. It was this inefficiency that made the rise of Bolshevism possible; and only efficient opposition can bring about its fall. Bolshevism has set out to destroy all civilised government, and will do so unless it is first destroyed. It is, as has been shown, essentially anti-democratic, and can no more make peace with democracy than anarchy with law. It is international in its principle and is directed against patriotism in every form. As it recognises no argument but force, treaties and conventions are but conveniences to gain, in Lenin's phrase, "a breathing space," or to make its opponent waste valuable time. While straining every nerve of intrigue and duplicity to obtain peace with the Western Powers, the Bolsheviks are launching revolution in the East. Indian agitators, first imported from Berlin, have been trained in Moscow and are become the astutest of adepts. Egypt has not been neglected. The Mongolian troops are cherished, not only as unconcerned tools in carrying out every abomination devised by the Bolsheviks, but as evangelists to be let loose on China and raise the teeming millions of the Dragon Empire against European order. Hungary and Bavaria are evidence of the futility of the "cordon sanitaire," and even if once suppressed, the mischief may break out again

at any moment. Those who think that peace can be made with the Bolsheviks ignore not only the fact that their rule in Russia is based exclusively upon force and is the antithesis of representative government, but their avowed intention of carrying the war to its bitter end against the civilised democracies of the world. Even while the olive branch is held out, Bolshevik agents in various guises, among which the Red Cross figures largely, attempt to undermine the existing order in France, England, and Italy. For this purpose passports of Allied subjects have been stolen or are sought to be bought, up to 25,000 Rs. having been offered for a British passport. Concealment on the main question there is none. "The Red Army," said Zinoviev at the end of February, "is destined to fight in the streets of London, Paris, and Rome to defend the great cause of Communism." "A new peace now," wrote the *Northern Commune* a month later, "would assuredly not last long. It would come to grief in a world revolution in which the Imperialists would be beaten." When this is understood, there is one further lesson to be learnt. The only defence against Bolshevism is to attack the Bolsheviks. Against societies, Governments, and armies that are stationary their propaganda will always prove a successful solvent. Assailed with energy and courage, Bolshevism, like other forms of crime, will quickly be mastered. In the eighteenth century, Europe put down the pirates of Algiers.

The pirates who now have control of the Russian ship of State constitute a far greater danger. They have been suffered already too long.

In two short years Russia has passed from the despotism of the Romanovs to experience to the full the despotism of the Social Democrats. According to the words of an Assistant People's Commissar, the change accomplished is that while formerly a hundred and eighty thousand landlords were happy, now two hundred and thirty thousand Bolsheviks are happy. The price paid for this has been the uprooting of culture, the crushing of the educated classes, the destruction of industry and commerce, the abolition of the slender habits of labour and discipline that existed before, the dispersion of wealth, the inculcation of bestiality and arrogance, and the extension of corruption through every grade of society. For the despotism of the Romanovs, which was responsible for encouraging sloth and servility and for preventing every attempt to raise the level of education and morals of the people, little indeed can be said. Nevertheless, in the most licentious moments of its orgies, in its cruellest measures of repression, in the stupidest outrages put by it on sentiments of liberty and progress, the dreams of its most fervid reactionary agents did not approach the hellish reality achieved in barely more than a year by the minions of German-Jewish Social Democracy known in the scroll of history as the Bolsheviks.

CHAPTER VI

HUNGRY PETROGRAD

THE Russian empire comprises, or rather comprised, a seventh part of the habitable globe. The government of Tambov alone is larger than the whole of France. Wheaten bread in Russia used to cost a penny the pound, and rye bread a halfpenny. The cornfields of Russia used not only to feed all Russia, so that all Russia was satiated, but to export thousands of tons of grain to foreign countries, among others sending to the British Isles over fifteen per cent. of the corn they consumed. How comes it then that the capital of Russia should be hungry? It would seem as if some gigantic catastrophe of nature must have occurred to account for so astonishing a result, as if the very fields had been blasted and fruitful juices of the land dried up. No such thing. Petrograd is hungry, and Moscow, and Kozlov and Saratov too, for the matter of that, because the Bolsheviks wish them to be so. Why the Bolsheviks desire to starve Petrograd is a question we may leave for the moment and consider how the thing is done. The process, indeed, is

absurdly simple. On every railway line leading into the city you intend to starve you establish at least two points at which every train is searched for provisions, and bread, sugar, butter, grain, and potatoes are taken away except so minute a portion of the first three as cannot suffice for a man for more than one, or at most two, days. At the exit from the station where the train arrives is a guard that again searches passengers' luggage, and the same thing is done at points established on every road leading into the city. Then you may be reasonably sure that only a minimum of provisions will find their way in. So much for the passenger trains. As to goods trains, the matter is not more difficult. First, all private dealing in provisions is prohibited, so impeded as to be made profitless. Then so low a price is fixed for articles of prime necessity that the peasant, who is the producer, will not sell. Having thus crippled supply and choked distribution, you establish immense armies of inexperienced, incompetent, and corrupt officials, whose aim is to prevent the resuscitation of the one and the natural development of the other, send out bands of armed brigands into the country to requisition food at the prices aforementioned, and when as the result you obtain some nine trucks of food a day instead of the ninety normally demanded by the city, loudly proclaim that this is due to bourgeois speculators who are battening on the blood of the poor. Nine trucks a day must be considered a favourable result: often less

is obtained; which is not surprising when it is considered that over sixty per cent. of the locomotives in the country have been allowed to go out of repair and that less than two-thirds of the total number of trucks are in going order. To prevent any doubt on the subject, provisions can be delayed in transit until they have become bad. Thus in December, 1918, some hundred tons of potatoes for Petrograd were detained at a station a hundred and fifty miles distant until they were all frozen. Or, if this is not sufficient, they can be kept in the storehouses after arrival until they become completely rotten, the method adopted to deal with a large consignment of carrots a month earlier.

If in the summer of 1917 anyone had engaged a servant, saying "You shall have an eighth, or if you work very hard a quarter, of a pound of poor black bread a day, a white roll once a year, horsemeat at 14s. per lb. and beef at £2, no milk, no butter, no eggs, no cheese, 1lb. of paraffin a month, no tea, coffee at from £4 to £6 per lb., and pay 2*s.* for a tram ride, while I eat a pound of white bread, and have butter, meat, jam, sweets, chocolate, and my tram fares cost 4*d.*," he would have been thought mad. Yet this is precisely what within eighteen months the Bolsheviks had done with the Russian public. Throughout the summer and to December, 1918, Petrograd was in this position. The Red Army and the true Communist officials had everything they wanted, and went about

with ostentatiously well-fed looks; workmen not in the direct employ of the Northern Commune, the government which the Petrograd Bolsheviks erected and the Moscow central Bolshevik machine afterwards destroyed, fared badly; the majority of the educated classes worse.

A traveller returning to Petrograd in the autumn of 1918 could not fail to be struck by the altered aspect of the town. He had come, of course, prepared for changes. He knew that hotels and restaurants no longer existed, that many principal shops were shut, and that there was a strict limit of space for inhabitants in "bourgeois" flats. He had come provided with as much food for his own use as he could smuggle through repeated searches, the last and most brutal of which was on arrival in Petrograd itself. But nothing could prepare one for the atmosphere of torpor, of decline and degradation that hung over everything. The very aspect of the railway station had changed. There was something unexpected about its appearance, a new impression queerly reminiscent of that experienced by one who for the first time steps from the platform of the station at Venice on to the broad stone pavement alongside her grand waterway. Not that there is any beauty about the Nicolas Station at Petrograd. Still, there was a resemblance. A few seconds and the connection was established. There were no cabs. Now on Sundays and at slack hours one may be accustomed to a difficulty of finding cabs,

but at three o'clock on a week-day their absence from the yard of the central terminus in one of the chief European capitals creates a void in the picture that makes one shut his eyes and open them again to be sure that it is not a dream. Not a cab, and, what was more, obviously no expectation of cabs. Instead, a number of ancient men and boys with handcarts of diverse patterns, but all looking as though it were doubtful could their rickety springs and wheels reach the end of a journey once undertaken. When bargaining began, it appeared that fares had gone up to three and four times the figure of cab fares seven months before; nor was that all, for not a man or boy would budge before he was promised, in addition to his money, a certain quantity of bread. For three pounds of bread one might have had a barrow and porter without opening one's purse; and half an hour's shoving and carrying was finally agreed upon for one pound of bread and forty roubles. Without bread, twice the price would not start competition for the job; not even with the promise of cigarettes, that formerly were an Open Sesame. "Cigarettes won't fill your stomach," remarked an old man sadly.

Outside the station there were a few cabs, and the horses not in bad trim. But the fares they asked were prohibitive to any but "Comrades." A cabman in a provincial town once answered, when expostulated with on the sum he demanded: "Why, I'm only charging you sixty roubles, because I see you are a

miserable 'boorjooee' (bourgeois) and can't afford more. If you were a commissar, now, or some other of the aristocracy, I should ask double!" In Petrograd no one but the new aristocracy could afford cabs even at the beginning of winter, and as the nights grew longer and colder, cabs became yet rarer and fares higher. Many of the horses were already eaten, and with the lapse of time the claims of the knacker became harder to resist. Besides, forage was so dear and so difficult to procure as to make it almost impossible to keep horses profitably, not to mention that harness will frequently need minor repairs, cushions require patching, wheels greasing; and where was leather to come from, and needle and cotton, and oil? Towards the end of October these were the ruling prices in Petrograd: Beef, 20 Rs. per lb., but very hard to get; no meat was given "by the card." Horsemeat, 7–9 Rs. plentiful; horsemeat shops had become among the most frequent and noticeable in the town, being advertised by signs depicting a noble steed disporting himself in the midst of green pastures. Fresh fish, 15 Rs., but hard to get of good quality, and only sold in small quantities. Salt fish: smoked herrings, 2.50–5 Rs. each; vobla, the cheapest and most despised of fish, with hardly any flesh on it, 3.50 Rs. per lb., four going to the pound; sudak, an excellent Russian fish, 6–8 Rs. per lb. Herrings, indeed, cost 1.20–1.50 Rs. at co-operatives, by the card, but were very rarely given out. Potatoes, 3.30–

3.60 Rs. per lb., at co-operatives 1.10–1.80; cabbage, 2.60–2.80; beetroot, 3.60; turnips, 3; carrots, 4; onions, 6; coffee, real, 28–36, substitute 14–26; tea, 40–50, but only to be found by chance; butter, 60; jam, made with sugar, 35, or with treacle, 15–25; sugar, 40–45; chocolate, 80; bread, 14, and rye flour 15, but the latter very hard to obtain. Bread, by the card, 1.10, in the following proportions: 1st category, ½ lb. a day; 2nd category, ¼ lb.; 3rd category, ⅛ lb.; 4th category, nothing. The quality of the bread was poor owing to a large admixture of straw. Tinned fish, of second-rate quality, was 5–12 Rs. a tin.; tinned tomatoes, very poor and difficult to find, 7–9 Rs.; caviare, 18–45 Rs. per lb., according to quality; and cheese was non-existent.

There were, as has been mentioned, four categories, into which all Petrograd was divided for the purpose of receiving food. The first comprised workmen and persons directly in the employment of the Councils, and many of these, for various reasons, received additional cards, entitling them to extra advantages. Mistresses of flats in which five or more lived, without a servant, also were counted in the first category. They received ½ lb. of bread a day, about fourteen herrings, and 10 lb. of potatoes a month, and an occasional dole of fat and sugar. Salt we were well off for all the winter, though there was a panic at one moment and the price outside the co-operatives went up to 7 Rs. per lb. The second category comprised

all members of professional unions, who did not belong to the first category, and received, in addition to their ¼ lb. of bread a day, rather fewer herrings and potatoes, and a pound of sugar once in six months. The third category got ⅛ lb. of bread and practically nothing else. The fourth, nothing at all.

It must not, however, be thought that genuine Communists were restricted to their first category ration. These gentry have always had plenty, not only of bread and meat, but also of butter, chocolate, and sweets as well. They had naturally their own means of obtaining supplies, while recourse could always be had to perquisitions in the flats of those suspected to have food and to requisition of the slender stores that unfortunate citizens had been reckoning on for the winter. To the unprivileged, the distribution of food took place through the co-operatives that were founded in 1917 by combinations of house committees and employees in Government departments, or to such as had no means of obtaining membership in them, through "town-stores," which, poor as the co-operatives might be, were distinctly worse. There were also a large number of "social dining-rooms," commonly known as "stolovki," where dinner could be obtained for 3 Rs. 50 kop. "How cheap!" will be the first comment; the second, "Hm, perhaps." For the word dinner was a misnomer. A plate of soup without meat or fat, consisting, indeed, of hot water into which a few lentils or pieces of dried cabbage had

found their way, a small portion of vobla minced and dished up with a little potato, and occasionally, but not always, a thin slice of bread, made up the whole of the repast. At some of these dining-rooms there was a *plat du jour*, generally consisting of two small rounds of minced horse, and costing 12 Rs. The stolovki were now in their heyday; afterwards they fell on evil times; but even in their prime it cannot be said that the meal provided could claim to be more than a rather sickly lunch. By no power of imagination could it be thought of as a real dinner, and it is interesting to note, as giving a standard of values, that it cost thirty-five times as much, and probably contained thirty-five times as little sustenance, as the dinner provided by the Great Britain to Poland and Galicia Fund to refugees two years before. The dining-rooms, further, were dirty, and the wooden spoons and primitive knives and forks provided repulsive. There were, indeed, a few stolovki of superior quality; one, for instance, got up for the benefit of musical students at the Conservatorium, and another attached to an experimental school of cookery, where a decent, if slender, meal that might be considered dinner was served, and where the floor and utensils were clean and the kitchen above suspicion.

The premises of former restaurants were naturally commandeered for stolovki, and the better the establishment had been, the worse it now became. To

turn the halls of The Bear and of Contant's, as who should say the Carlton and the Savoy, into a common scene of dilapidation and dirt was a policy doubtless pleasing to the masters of Petrograd as affording ocular proof of the extent of the degradation they had inflicted upon manners and the elegances of life.

Since the third category, which comprised all the educated classes not in the employment of the Councils and not having a trade behind which to shield themselves, received nothing but ⅛ lb. of bread, great efforts were made to get into the second category, which received ¼ lb. of bread and occasional other supplies. To this end professional, or, as we should say, trade unions multiplied and expanded. Once great ladies engaged themselves as waitresses in cafés, partly for the wages, but partly for the privilege their position conferred of joining the waiters' union. It was probably to prevent this that in November the majority of these cafés were shut up, just as the formerly numerous shops where secondhand articles were sold on commission were shut in order to prevent the "bourgeois" from earning money by sale of goods that the "Comrades" preferred should be kept until a convenient opportunity for robbery. The daughters of a well-known publisher, whose business had been confiscated, eagerly sought small posts in the institution known at the Proletkult, a pretentious centre of bad art for the masses, that had installed itself in the beautiful building of the Assemblée de la

Noblesse. But when it was found that the professional unions might thus become a shelter for the educated, attention was turned to these bodies themselves, and in February the process of "democratising" them, in other words, of turning the decent element out of their management, in order to give place to the unmitigated cad, was the order of the day.

For a month prices remained steady. Lists of figures do not convey the full pictures, but it is of interest to note that, on November 10th, forty-two pounds of potatoes, nine and a half pounds of onions, and seven pounds of low quality salt fish cost 275 roubles, or, at the old rate of exchange, £27 10s. And how long would this last? The food of a well-to-do person in Petrograd at this date may be reckoned at 1½ lb. of fish of the above description, 1 lb. of potatoes, ½ to ¾ lb. of bread, and perhaps ½ lb. of some other vegetables. The fish, it should be said, was weighed with the bones, which constituted the greater part of it. For four people, then, the potatoes would last ten days, or, with extra economy, say a fortnight. The fish little over one day. It may be judged, therefore, how intolerably expensive life had become. To exist on the amount sold by the card would have been wholly impossible, and it was necessary to buy supplies at the market, that is, at contraband rates. Let us now consider the day's meals. Breakfast would consist of a small piece of bread and perhaps a slice or two of a large

vegetable called redka, with the crisp flavour and taste of a mild radish; dinner of herring soup boiled with potatoes, and served with the herrings in it, a dish of some other boiled vegetables, perhaps cabbage, at 5 Rs. a pound, or beetroot at 6; for supper the remains of the soup heated up, with perhaps a couple of vobla, first beaten with a hammer in order to be eatable, and then grilled on top of the stove, with small pieces of bread again at supper and dinner. For variety, the soup might be of the kind called "uha," which delicately made and of expensive fish was Rasputin's favourite, seasoned with onions, peppercorns, and laurel leaves, but the fish was extracted and served to us poor folk, who dare not waste a morsel, as a separate, if tasteless, dish. Not a crumb is allowed to fall to the ground, but is diligently treasured, and then, when enough have been saved, made into little patties with the grounds of used coffee, baked and served as cakes. Similar little cakes could also be made out of rye, sold by smugglers at 13 to 14 Rs. per lb. The quantity of food above described does not perhaps sound entirely insufficient. Nor indeed is it insufficient to support life and a fair amount of strength, and when one is hungry all the time the absence of variety does not make the difference commonly supposed. What, however, was extremely trying was the absence of fat and sugar. These, as will be seen from the foregoing account, did not enter at all into the day's

bill of fare. Milk was only obtainable with great difficulty for infants and invalids. One might as a great treat have a little butter, or a lump of sugar, or a sweet; but this would be by way of a rarity, and, however agreeable, could not substantially add to the sustenance afforded by the regular diet of salt fish and potatoes. Neither butter, nor oil, nor other fat were obtainable except at such high prices as to be prohibitive except to the very rich, that is to say, commissars and their friends, speculators, and millionaires who had made their peace with the Bolsheviks by means of huge bribes. One man who had made half a million sterling out of opium smuggling said: "I don't admit the existence of hunger or of cold." But then he was able to spend twenty-five or thirty thousand roubles a month on household expenses. Another, still richer, so late as Christmas, laughed at the suggestion that there was famine in Petrograd. His table was laden with bread, game, caviare, and sugar, and it was nothing to him that there might be people with incomes of a thousand roubles a month who could afford none of the last three. For ordinary mortals diet consisted of potatoes and salt fish. Those who could afford to buy enough of them lived badly; those who could not lived worse, or died.

Besides the high price of food another very disadvantageous circumstance was the difficulty of getting it, and the immense amount of time spent in

doing so. Every morning some one of the household would have to go to the co-operative for the day's ration of bread. This entailed standing in a queue for perhaps twenty, perhaps fifty minutes. Sometimes bread was only given out in the afternoon, sometimes not for a couple of days running. To get potatoes, the same procedure was necessary, but in the street, and this, as anyone who knows the Petrograd climate must be aware, was no joke. Even so, prolonged search would be necessary to find a hawker with potatoes, who would, moreover, refuse to sell more than a few pounds to one customer. In order to obtain a whole sack, favour must be made with some official at a district supply committee, involving the expenditure of much time, ingenuity, and cajolery, from whom an illicit order might be obtained on his depôt. Then, going thither after dark with his sack, the fortunate purchaser would have to shoulder his treasure and trudge back with it, making use of a tram should one happen to go his way and not be so crowded as to preclude the possibility of dumping his load on to the step. Herrings, vobla, and other vegetables had to be purchased either in the open market at prices considerably higher than those quoted, or at a co-operative attached to some favoured institution, such as the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs or the Admiralty, on a card of membership lent by a considerate possessor of one. And all these things could be

obtained not every day, and had when bought to be carried back by hand, the purchaser, moreover, bringing his own string with him, since string was one of the many commodities in Petrograd that was becoming rare by degrees and beautifully less.

By the middle of December the food situation had taken a turn for the worse. Sugar had gone to 60 Rs., butter to 100, chocolate to 150. Bad fat was quoted at 40 to 50, cocoanut oil at 30, and potatoes at 8 to 12 were hardly obtainable. This was not a question of the price: more than 12 Rs. per lb. was not asked for potatoes, but it was considered the greatest stroke of luck if they could be found at all. Smoked herrings were now at 10 to 17 Rs. each, according to size, turnips 15 Rs. per lb., and at the co-operatives there was nothing to be had but the bread ration, saccharine at 6 to 8 Rs. a gramme, lemon essence, and tea substitutes. Even coffee substitutes had given out. Bread was at 15 Rs. Poor tinned fish cost 20 to 30 Rs. the tin. Food-shops of practically every description except fruiterers'—and in Russia vegetables are not sold by fruiterers—had been shut by order of the Bolsheviks. Apples cost 5 to 6 Rs. each. The pigeons, formerly one of the sights of the Petrograd streets and considered as sacred birds that might not be touched, had now vanished, whether eaten or themselves starved to death; and this was also the case in Moscow. Dogs and cats were beginning to be eaten.

At the same time, trains of geese and other delicacies were arriving for the Christmas dinner of the Putilov workmen. One ray of sunshine had indeed been ours in the gloom of gathering despair: the Bolshevik anniversary. For weeks before it had been announced that in celebration of this event there would be an extra distribution of food, and expectancy as the great day neared went up to fever point.

On November 6th, immense, agitated queues waited for the white rolls that had been promised, and when up to midnight there was in some districts no sign of them, many loudly complained that the Bolsheviks had hoaxed us and there would be no rolls at all. However, next day the Cassandras were discomfited; all Petrograd had the joy of eating rolls about the size of the A.B.C. 2d. article, with a few currants stuck in them, and rather stale. The first two categories also received $\frac{1}{16}$ lb. of tea and the first $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. of fat. To get $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of fat, a lady who managed for a household of seven stood in a queue from ten to midnight and again next morning from nine to eleven o'clock. Nobody but workmen and Conciliar officials got any fat at all. It must be said that for the most part Petrograd was pleased. There is a Russian story of a peasant who applied to his parish priest for a recipe for happiness. He was miserable in his home, he said, quarrelled with his wife, and wanted to learn how to escape from affliction. The priest, taking his promise to obey exactly, ordered

him to add his pig to the number of his household. The peasant's discomfort was only increased. At the end of the month the cow was added, the peasant still bore it; but when, at the end of the second month, the priest ordered that the horse, too, should be taken into the house, it was almost too much to bear. Still the peasant bore it, and only at the end of the third month prayed to be relieved of the intolerable burden. Then the priest told him to put all the animals out of the house again. The peasant came back overjoyed: "Oh, I am so happy," he said, "I have never known such happiness!" "Just so," answered the priest, "and I have shown you that happiness and misery are relative. Now you know how really happy you were before." Petrograd was like the peasant of the story. Anyone, it might be thought, would recognise the mockery of getting the "anniversary" provisions that were distributed by the Bolsheviks, when three weeks earlier they had been rushing trains of flour to the help of the "starving" Germans. But it was not so. The simple Russian public were as pleased as a child with a toy. It is not their nature to reason deeply. Give them white rolls every day and they will be discontented; starve them on black bread, and one sudden white roll delighted them. This was of the same nature as the paradox that Russians, if paid regularly or by contract, will do as little as possible, that little

often amounting to nothing. If not paid and given an occasional tip, much can be got out of them.

Nevertheless, with or without the anniversary doles, it was impossible for the average household to obtain enough provisions to maintain itself at home. Recourse must inevitably be had to a stolovka to eke out the paltry supplies of the domestic cupboard. By December fresh fish had become unobtainable, and caviare too expensive and tinned fish too poor to be of assistance.

A member of the public, however, could not enter a stolovka and make a meal as and when he liked; he must have a card entitling him to eat at a particular stolovka, and then for the period of a month at least he could not change. Other restaurants and dining-rooms, like hotels, had long been abolished. At the Sailors' Club, formerly the Hotel Regina, strangers could have a slight repast for fifteen roubles, with the fun thrown in of seeing able seamen spend 300 or 400 Rs. on their lunch, and take out sheets of "Kerenkies" with which to pay, cutting off the twenty or forty rouble notes with a scissors. Otherwise, a newcomer to Petrograd might well starve.

And, in fact, newcomers and old inhabitants, all did starve. Since the spring of 1918 the majority had doubtless had too little food, perhaps from a half to three-quarters of what they would have eaten in normal times. It is hardly an exaggeration to say

that a healthy man was never during this period without a keen appetite, even at the moment of rising from table after his best meal. The reason is not far to seek. Even during the summer there had been a deficiency of eggs, bread, milk, butter, sugar, and cheese, these all being obtainable, but at prices that compelled much less than usual of them to be eaten. Very many people, owing to the high price of meat and the difficulties of a domestic household, dined at vegetarian restaurants, where the greater part of the food consisted of cabbage and potatoes served in unsatisfying portions. Before winter, these, too, were closed. Thus we had already been hungry for several months, when, from what before had seemed meagre fare but to a backward glance was plenty itself, we were plunged into a condition of famine prices and famine products. In such circumstances life becomes reduced to the simplest and the most disagreeable terms. You cannot go to friends, because they will feel obliged to offer something, and you know what an expense this means. You cannot invite friends to you, because of the bill it will run up, and the extra exertion that will be required to obtain food to replace what they have eaten. You cannot buy anything not essential, because the price represents so much food. You cannot go anywhere that is not absolutely necessary, since movement requires expenditure of energy, which again demands more food to be made up.

You have to think all day of food—how to get it, and when, and what you will get. Only the stimulus of a task that must be done by a certain time can prevent the mind from dwelling upon food, and, in spite of the energy expended, it is far preferable to be in constant work of an exacting character than to be able to husband one's strength, but have the mind free to be preyed on by the ceaseless pictures with which an empty stomach fills the imagination. Actors and singers took to asking for payment, at least partly, in kind. To bribe their goodwill the Bolsheviks put members of the State Theatre companies in the first category. A celebrated tenor gave a concert for a fee of five pounds of sweets. Many obtained employment in organising entertainments for the Red Army, and were glad of the chance to get food from their new patrons. Conversation in Petrograd other than that necessitated by work had come to be exclusively on the subject of food. Have you found butter? What did you pay for it? How much is bread? Will there be a distribution of sugar at Christmas? How much wood have you? Can paraffin be obtained? Is it true that the potatoes for December are all frozen? Alas! this was true, and almost every such question, and there are thousands, invariably received unfavourable answers. The hardest deprivation was probably the absence of fat in the cooking, for want of which, people, while they could, frequently had recourse to vaseline, or

cotton-seed oil, or castor oil. But vaseline rapidly became so expensive as to be unusable, and castor oil, though its use in cooking is not attended by disagreeable consequences, has a most unpleasant taste. Cotton-seed oil is definitely unwholesome, and the majority, therefore, fell back upon boiling. Now a diet of boiled fish, so salt that it must be boiled almost to the point of tastelessness not to cause a devouring thirst, and boiled vegetables, in the quantities above mentioned, has nothing dreadful about it at the moment, but being indulged in for weeks together produces physical weakness and nervous exhaustion. Legs begin to get limp, feet to shuffle, the heart resents going upstairs, sleep becomes broken; nervous control ceases to be automatic; moments occur when without warning or reason the fingers drop objects they hold; sudden fits of elation seize you, alternating with periods of depression as irrational and uncontrollable but of longer duration. Physical work that before was normal becomes an almost insupportable burden, and men grow pale and thin and hollow-cheeked, mere ghosts of what they were before. Prolonged hunger produces, too, a debasing effect on character. It becomes an effort not to envy others their food. The eye involuntarily follows each morsel from dish to plate, automatically measures each helping, and resents hospitality shown to others. Persons, perhaps thoroughly trustworthy before, take to pilfering. The mind grows warped,

and thoughts diseased and mean. In every man's heart fear becomes an abiding guest.

This process of muscular, mental, and nervous decay was doubtless accelerated by excessive drinking, not of alcohol, but of tea or tea substitute. Considered as a drug, the tea of Petrograd was so weak, owing to its costliness, as to be harmless, drunk in whatever quantity, and the substitutes were mostly made of wholesome berries; but what was extremely harmful was the quantity of liquid drunk. For two reasons it was scarcely possible not to indulge in this habit. First, to cheat the stomach; for although the stomach gets accustomed to the smaller fare, the feeling of hunger does not decrease. Woe betide the man who by chance eats a meal even half the size of a good old-time meal; violent stomach-ache ensues, in the midst even of which he does not cease to be hungry. But liquid may be imbibed to an astonishing extent, and for the time undoubtedly staves off the pangs of hunger, only afterwards to increase weakness by putting an extra strain on the kidneys and the heart. By the end of November, while on the one hand it was common to see persons of formerly solid appearance now as thin as laths, and the sight of men falling in the street from exhaustion no longer caused the least surprise, on the other there were those who to a casual glance had flourished and even grown fat under famine treatment, being in reality swollen from drinking too much. The other

reason was the desire for warmth. Petrograd was not only hungry, but cold. A Dutch stove, of the pattern universally used in Russian towns, requires from five to ten logs of wood a day to keep the room reasonably warm, which for a five-roomed flat and kitchen spells an expenditure of about a "sagen" a week. This, which is the Russian measure of wood, is commonly translated "fathom"; but, without exact dimensions being given, it is enough to say that in Petrograd in 1914 a sagen cost 8 roubles, in 1915, from 15 to 18, and had gone up by November, 1917, to 300 roubles, at which price it was very difficult to obtain. To keep a flat warm during the winter would have cost some 12,000 roubles, and to obtain the quantity of wood required would have been impossible. We therefore lived in cold rooms, happy when the temperature was over 50° Fahrenheit, and no whit surprised when it was under 40°. People often put on their fur coats, as they did in theatres, which were not warmed at all, but for long at a time together this is very tiring. A temperature of, say, 58° does not sound terrible, but is so to people weak from want of food, who come in from perhaps 10° or 15° below zero in the street. Therefore everyone drank tea, and yet more tea, because it was hot, and there was no other way of getting heat.

As the winter drew on, the shortage of fuel began to make itself felt in other ways than the coldness

of living rooms. The Russian kitchen, for instance, is furnished with a flat-topped stove that takes from five to nine logs of wood for an hour's cooking, according to the skill of the stoker and the quality of the wood. It is innocent of gas-rings or other labour-saving devices. As this quantity of wood meant a serious drain upon slender stores, cooking was largely done on a miniature stove known as an "economka," designed, it is said, by a Petrograd workman, and given by the local councils to all Communists gratis. An economka would cook a dinner with an expenditure of two logs of wood, but had the disadvantage that it gave but little warmth to the kitchen, where the cook thus worked in an atmosphere about freezing point, and required to be stoked the whole time with small morsels of wood chopped for the purpose; if left to itself for five minutes it would go out. Moreover, only one dish could be cooked at a time on it, so that while the potatoes were cooking the soup got cold, and water for washing up would have to be heated separately after dinner, entailing yet more chopping.

An even worse effect of the fuel shortage was the deterioration of the tramway service. Without any actual breakdown, the efficiency of the service, that had formerly been high, gradually declined; by the end of November about half the total number of cars had been taken off, the remainder were running at not much more than half-

speed, and were insufferably crowded, the fare, too, being put up by degrees from the 10 kopeck rate of 1917 to a rouble. Moscow was, however, worse off in this respect even than Petrograd. The cars were older and in worse repair, and by the end of the summer of 1918 probably no more than a third of the normal number were on the road; while to get a place often meant waiting for twenty minutes or half an hour, and always having a free fight. The state of the trams may seem at first sight remote from the question of food; but locomotion, or the want of it, is a matter of much concern to the underfed. Uncertainty in the running of the trams also occasions great unpunctuality, which beyond its ordinary regrettable consequences produces specially bad results on persons living without servants. Many of the *intelligentsia* were now entirely without domestics, owing to various reasons. First, servants' wages were exceedingly high; secondly, a servant must be fed, which was very costly and difficult; then bad company might be introduced into the house, with robbery and murder as the consequence; besides which, many servants, being country girls, had gone back to their villages to escape from hunger in Petrograd. But the chief reason was that once a servant were admitted into your house, you were entirely at her mercy, seeing that objection to her demand, however unreasonable, might be answered by a denunciation, and that formal appli-

cation to a Bolshevik authority could only lead to Lisa's or Masha's justification, and possibly to the imposition of a heavy fine on the applicant "bourgeois." Members of the household, therefore, or of the groups who banded together for meals for the sake of economy, took it in turns to make the stoves, fetch the provisions, and cook the dinner, and a delay of half an hour in heating, marketing, or serving the dinner might make a sensible difference to strength and spirits for the day.

Such was the state of Petrograd, viewed from the angle of supplies, when the seriously cold weather began and an immediate disaster occurred. Up to mid-December it had been possible for much money to obtain everything. There was a rich man who gave a feast on the occasion of his daughter's wedding. He was on particularly good terms with the Bolsheviks, and the feast was given exactly as it would have been in the old days, with white bread, unlimited "zakuski," and wine. There were forty guests, and the cost was a round 28,000 roubles. But on December 20th a terrific snowstorm took place between Tambov and Moscow, raging with intervals for five days and blocking the southern lines for a fortnight, and the miserably few trucks of flour that had wormed their way up from the teeming cornfields of the Volga entirely stopped. Petrograd was without bread. Not only did the price leap up ten roubles, but it was impossible to obtain at all, since anyone

who had bread refused to sell at a moment when it was uncertain how long the block might last. Instead of bread the Bolsheviks distributed oats; not oatmeal, nor even cleaned oats, but oats in the husk, exactly as they are given to horses. There were two ways in which they could be prepared: either by boiling them into a broth, from which the husks could be fished out when served, or by passing them laboriously through a coffee mill and then making a kind of clammy porridge. But, just as there were people who, following the custom of Russian *hors d'œuvres*, ate their ration of salt herring raw, thereby frequently developing catarrh of the stomach, with a predisposition to dysentery and cholera, so many unwisely made their oats into little cakes and scones to replace bread, and in this form ate them, husks and all, to the great increase of intestinal and throat trouble. And when trains began again fitfully to run, the food situation of Petrograd had taken another big jump on the downhill path towards the abyss that it afterwards reached. Bread, that had gone to 26 Rs. per lb., went down to 18 to 22, and butter to 75 to 90, but beef stood at 30, veal 28, horse 14. Wood cost 2 Rs. the log, and matches 2 Rs. a box. Loaf sugar was at 90 to 120, sand sugar 55, tea 100, coffee 75, coffee substitutes 55, and candles 20 Rs. per lb. The price of white flour, a great rarity, was quoted at 30 to 35 Rs. per lb., and rye flour at 22 to 25. Oatmeal could be had at 28,

macaroni at 40, rice for 30; but all only to be found by chance or after much private inquiry, every transaction being shrouded in the deepest mystery. Smoked herrings were 17 to 26 Rs. each. Milk, of very poor quality, could be had without much difficulty at 12 to 14 Rs. a pint, and paraffin at 5 to 7 Rs. per lb., the latter much in demand for cooking with Primus heaters. It is scarcely surprising that, under such conditions, and with the temperature going from hard frost to slushy warmth and again back to bitter cold, disease played havoc, and the death-rate in Petrograd increased to between three and four thousand a day, or that in December and January together sixteen thousand died of sheer starvation. Cats' and dogs' flesh, which had already begun to be eaten, now were regularly quoted at the street markets at 2.50 and 3 to 4.50 Rs. per lb. Horrible things began to take place. Cases were reported where horses, dying of starvation in the streets, were watched by ravenous crowds, who, when they judged the last moment had come, flung themselves on the poor wretch and hacked up the carcase on the spot. A still living horse was on one occasion observed to be gnawed by a band of starving dogs. Stories of cannibalism began to be current, coming first from suburban villages, always the worst off for food, and then becoming persistent in Petrograd and Moscow themselves. At the beginning of January a woman in Moscow went mad from the belief that her two

children, who had gone one morning as usual to fetch the daily bread and had never returned, had been abducted and murdered in order to be eaten. For long it seemed impossible that such a depth of loathsome need should be possible in a European country, but there is unfortunately little room to doubt that by March, if not before, such practices did exist, and that the Chinese executioners, maintained by the Bolsheviks, drove a grisly trade by selling their victims' flesh for food.

Before the great snowstorm Moscow, though in a worse position for trams, was considerably better off for food than the northern capital. As late as the third week in December, bread in Moscow cost 1 R. 10 kop. by the card, as against 1 R. 52 kop. in Petrograd, and privately 12–13 Rs. per lb.; sugar 60, butter 60, pork 40, beef 20–24, horse 13, potatoes 4–6, but said to be very difficult to procure without the aid of a friend at court, viz., in a commissariat. Chickens were 120–180 Rs. each. Wood and milk were the same price as in Petrograd, but harder to obtain. In the course of three months meat had twice been distributed by the card. Soap, sold by the card in insufficient quantities, was 5 Rs. a piece; in the market 17, and bad quality at that. The big markets at Moscow had from the summer onwards been the scene of frequent fracas, raids being made on the illicit tradesmen by the Red Guards, accompanied by arrests and shots. "Stolovki" in Moscow were not so completely or-

ganised as in the capital, and consequently better. There were fewer of them, and a meal was 5 Rs., but a card unnecessary to obtain it. That the famine prices were not due to any lack of provisions in the country is proved by those ruling at the same time at Rogachev, a town in the government of Mogilev, one night's journey from Moscow: beef 6 Rs. per lb., black bread 2.50, bread not being given by card at all, wheat flour 5, butter 30, cheese 30, sugar 15 and sand sugar 8, good sausage 8, milk 1 R. a pint, eggs 6–7 Rs. for ten, chickens 8–12 Rs. each; white vegetables, sweets, and cakes were to be had in abundance. It may be thought that the difference was due to the breakdown of transport, but though the chaotic state of the railways and the ruinous condition of rolling stock must have in any case raised prices in the capitals, the chief reason was that Moscow was held tight in the Bolsheviks' grip, whereas the government of Mogilev had only recently fallen into their hands and that they had not yet succeeded in putting the screw firmly on. Prices, however, were already going up, and doubtless before long reached the starvation limit invariably touched under pressure of the Bolshevik rule. That this and no other is the main cause of the famine in Russia is proved by the case of Saratov. This attractive and well-built town is the centre of one of the world's chief corn districts, has all the wealth of the Volga and of Astrakhan at its feet, has cattle close at hand, and is an important depôt for mineral oil, currants, and every

form of produce from the shores of the Caspian. All through the summer the position of Saratov had been doubtful. The Czecho-Slovaks had on several occasions been within a hundred versts of it, and Tsaritsin, further south on the Volga, had been constantly threatened by General Krasnov's Cossacks. In September everything was obtainable there, and at reasonable prices. The bazaar, for markets in the south of Russia are so called, overflowed with eggs, vegetables, and fruit. Milk, butter, meat, currants, and various grain were to be had in abundance. White bread was 3 Rs. per lb., and this although contraband. But with the capture of Simbirsk by the Bolsheviks in the middle of the month their position at Saratov improved, and three weeks later was made entirely secure by the fall of Samara. The result on supplies was at once apparent. Already there had been much grumbling among the populace at the interference of the Reds with trade, and their requisitioning of butter and flour, one workman, a rubber repairer, declaring that he was better off before the revolution on sixty roubles a month, with lodging thrown in, than since on fifteen hundred. Now the Bolsheviks felt themselves strong enough to apply with proper thoroughness their system of, in their words, socialising food supplies, but, in the public's view, causing artificial hunger. By the end of the year they had achieved a success that must be thought remarkable when it is considered that the country round teemed with food of every description.

First butter disappeared from the market, then flour; milk became extremely rare; and the supply of fish, that, owing to lack of river transport, had been feeble before, ceased altogether. Before Christmas the bazaar was wholly shut. No eggs, meat, butter, vegetables, or indeed food of any description, was to be had openly, except in minute quantities issued by the card. The distribution of meat entirely ceased. Bread was sold by the card, ¾ or ½ lb., according to category; good brown bread, but too fresh when sold. But the sale of private, that is, contraband bread stopped, not, however, because there was none in Saratov, for every peasant driving into the town brought four or five white loaves with him, hidden in the hay at the bottom of his sledge, but because Bolshevik money had ceased to have any value for the peasants and they would only sell bread in exchange for goods that paper money could not buy. Sugar was 70 Rs. per lb., tea 65, butter 45, lard 30, sausage 25, cigarettes a rouble each, tobacco 150 Rs. per lb. As none of these were distributed by the card at all, persons of moderate means in Saratov, though not starving as in Moscow and Petrograd, literally hungered in the midst of plenty. Wood was the same price as in the capitals. Moreover, the watch kept by the Reds was so strict that peasants would deal only with those who had long-established connections with them, for fear of denunciation. The writer, once coming into an acquaintance's flat where a transaction with butter and sausage was in process,

saw three strapping peasants, intelligent men from the German colony, two or more generations in Russia, blanch and tremble all over for fear he might be an emissary of the Bolsheviks. Yet the Germans had enjoyed protection above others, and the last shop where butter could be bought in the town had been kept by a German woman.

An argument used in favour of the Baconian theory is that, were Shakespeare really the author of his plays, he would never have condescended to bequeath his four-poster and other household objects in his will. Those who may have felt a certain astonishment at this and at the attention paid to personal articles in letters and diaries of the seventeenth century, would have quickly got over their surprise after a few weeks of life under the Bolsheviks. When little is made and hardly anything can be bought, the least trifles come to have a special value, since they are irreplaceable. Clothes, boots, gloves, goloshes, these were treasures far above their nominal worth, because they could not be obtained. Footgear, it is not too much to say, was a tragedy in Petrograd. Very inferior boots could be bought, after diligent search, at from 200 to 600 roubles, but goloshes, almost an essential of Russian life, were not to be had at all. The official theory that one pair of boots at 80 Rs., and one pair of goloshes at 30, were obtainable by every member of the population, had no relation to fact, and it was common to see people otherwise well dressed with their toes coming

through the holes in their worn-out boots. Linen also became most rare, and frayed collars and torn blouses objects that no longer attracted attention or demanded explanation. Only Bolsheviks had the means to be well dressed. Ladies' cotton or artificial silk stockings could be got secretly and as a great favour at 90 Rs. a pair. A pair of inferior socks cost twenty roubles, and a bed quilt fetched seven hundred and fifty. An old great coat sold for a thousand roubles, and five times that sum was asked for a poor secondhand lady's fur cape.

With the latter half of January, 1919, a slight improvement took place in the food situation. This was due to two causes. First, there were to be new Council elections in February, and, although the Bolsheviks had other more forcible means of preserving the Communist majority, it was still useful for them to buy back a little favour among the crowd. With this object, slender doles of sugar and flour were made to the first and second categories. Secondly, obstinate rumours that the British were marching, or soon to march, on Petrograd brought down prices, thus proving that, despite the famine, there were in the town considerable stocks of food which all the perquisitions by the Bolsheviks had not been able to discover, and their severities had only driven underground. Bread fell to 18 Rs. per lb., rye flour to 20, sugar to 75, beef to 20, veal to 17, grain and meal to 20–22, potatoes to 8–10, matches to 1.50 the box. Only such products in

which there was no margin stayed at their former prices or went higher. Tea rose to 150, coffee to 160 Rs. per lb. Onions remained at 10 Rs. per lb., herrings at 20 Rs. each. The flattering mirage of salvation at the hands of a loyal ally, however, soon vanished, and the awakening to reality was followed by another upward bound of prices, which progressively rose until in the middle of March bread stood at 35 Rs. per lb., rye flour at 40, sugar 110, butter 140–200, according to opportunity; ten eggs cost 75 Rs., a sagen of wood 500, one smoked herring 30; pork 85 Rs. per lb., horse 35, dogmeat 6–10, and "mixed meat" 8 Rs. per lb., this last believed to be a mixture of dog and cat and human flesh from the Chinese abattoir of the Gorohovaya.[1] At the stolovki, instead of the solid dish, cranberry fool began to be given. From March 18 to April 10 all passenger traffic was suspended, nominally in order to free more engines for the transport of the Red Army. Whatever the motive, the situation was no whit relieved, but only aggravated, for the "sackmen," individual peasant speculators, who brought food from the productive districts in sacks on their backs to Moscow and Petrograd, were no longer able to travel, and the capitals were cut off from the meagre supplies that had thus formerly nourished them. Meanwhile hardly a pound

[1] Down to February, 1919, the prices quoted were obtained by myself or by persons I can vouch for; those after I left Russia may be believed to be equally accurate, but I cannot personally guarantee them.

of the hundreds of tons of grain and flour lying on the banks of the Volga had reached the heart and the head of Russia. Bread had gone to 45 Rs. per lb., horse to 50, dog to 10, potatoes to 18, sugar to 200, butter to 250. But indeed, when prices reach such levels, a few roubles per lb. more or less hardly matter, since even lower they are, in the most literal sense, killing, and when higher, cannot be more deadly. On April 10 it was officially announced that cranberries would be given instead of bread. The trams now ran only in the daytime, and on Sundays not at all. In Moscow they have wholly ceased. Electric light, formerly capricious, is now only given for an hour a day. At the beginning of February Petrograd was bad enough. Filthy, dilapidated, shuttered, barely lit at night, its dejected and morose inhabitants lived feebly from day to day in a state of almost complete apathy. In April it is described as a town of the dying and of the dead. Since March its streets are altogether dark. Disease, terror, misery, and famine are its kings, and darkness reigns in the hearts of men and clouds their minds. Weakness has become so general that hallucinations begin at a temperature of less than two degrees above the normal.

But if this is the present, the future must be yet worse. Russia is living, barely living, on the remains of the industry of the past. This year[1], if the Bolshevik *régime* is allowed to last, there will be no sowing beyond the peasants' immediate needs, if indeed seed

[1] [1919.]

corn suffices for that, no wood will be cut or transported to the cities, and it seems inevitable that unless Petrograd is taken this summer by Kolchak or by the sluggard allies of Russia, a large proportion of some thirty million human beings in the northern governments must perish of cold and hunger. Last summer a Petrograd lawyer of credit, who had personal business with Lenin, was asked by him to dinner. He found the Bolshevik leader sumptuously served by footmen in the former imperial livery. A repast to match their magnificence was washed down by choice wines. No one could have guessed that there was want in Moscow or any restriction upon food. Lenin was in a scornful mood. "What blackguards I am surrounded with!" he cried. "It is positively disgusting to have to do business with them." It would be easy to answer with a *tu quoque*. But attention is here rather drawn to the utter incompetence of the Bolshevik Government. Lenin is a clever speaker, apt at repartee, and capable of a witty gibe even at his own expense; he and his colleagues are primed with endless Socialist catchwords that flow from their ready tongues; they are profoundly versed in the organisation of political intrigue, and are wholly without scruple; but the legend of their inordinate ability is devoid of foundation; for some people it is essential to idealise the central figure of the picture, and to such among foreigners Lenin has become a genius, albeit a genius from the pit. Nobody in

Russia except his henchmen thinks him so. Given a condition of anarchy, unlimited funds, a slogan of rapturously entrancing power to the uneducated, a clear view of the immediate object, that personal power, and utter ruthlessness in attaining the ultimate aim, that is the destruction of patriotism and of the educated classes of Russia, and it was not a work of peculiar difficulty for men with the training of the Bolsheviks to capture the machine of State: once captured, to govern with it was a task indeed to test capacity, and in this they have conspicuously failed. The hunger of Petrograd and Moscow is the best test of all. Why were the cities starved? In order, in the first place, to carry out in practice the Socialist theory that all production and distribution should be in the hands of the State; with which purpose twenty-two thousand officials were employed in the Petrograd supply committee drawing an aggregate salary of over twenty million roubles a month. Secondly, and more directly, to root out the spirit and the very life of the educated classes, who would have combated the tyranny of the Bolsheviks and who understood its meaning. Germany was the latter's inventor and natural friend, and the bread sent thither in November, 1916, was but one overt act in proof of the Bolsheviks' treason. If a second is required, we may take the case where, on the evacuation of Polotsk, the Bolsheviks deliberately abandoned seventeen wagons of sugar to the Germans, and threatened to shoot an

officer who tried to get them away. But hunger, with which they hoped finally to crush their enemies, has become their Frankenstein. The mechanism for producing it, once started, cannot be stayed; and its dread mills have ground out want, not only for foes, but for those who once were friends, until famine has by the throat both the professional, manufacturing, and trading classes, and the workmen to whom the millennium was promised, and the pauper class who held their reversion from the Bolsheviks, and the very Red Army is not safe from starvation.

CHAPTER VII

A PRODUCER IN BOLSHEVISIA

DISGUISE—a life in hiding—an assumed identity: these are the concomitants of everyday life as depicted in the exciting novels of Mr. Max Pemberton, but, outside of them, had not come my way before, and I should have expected that they would form a medium, in which, did one ever find oneself there, it would be hard to behave with any approach to ease and naturalness. But when a good friend met me at the Nicolas Station in Moscow and said, "Don't go back to your hotel. The Red Guards are looking for you," it seemed the simplest thing in the world to sit down on a bench in the boulevard and think out a new parentage, history, and personality. I was only three minutes' walk from the children's home that had been my chief care during the past months, but I could not go there, because the house porter, a time-server like all his breed, would instantly have denounced me, just as later he most lyingly denounced the worthy matron of the home for concealing agents in a British plot. In a twinkling I became someone else, with a whole set of

new relations, a new country, and a new outlook: the only thing I retained was my name, which dropped one letter, changed another, and took to itself a fancy double. There were too many people who knew me by name and sight for me to shed my name altogether, but I could change its form and assume a new nationality. From that hour I was Ivan Pollak-Ulanda, the son of the well-known Lettish Communist, Friedrich Ulanda, and his wife Fanny Pollak, of Viennese extraction, who was driven out of Russia in the year 1874, lived first in Austria, then in France, and finally emigrated to America, where he died seventeen years later, leaving his orphan son of nineteen—me—to fend for himself. With my subsequent history I need not trouble the reader: enough to say that it was fully worked out with due regard to place and date, and fulfilled the purpose for which it was intended. Throughout nearly six months that I so lived, I never hesitated to rely on my story, and I think that until the very end I was hardly suspected; certainly never by the many sailors, Red Army men, commissars, and miscellaneous persons into whose company I was thrown. According to the passes obtained for me from the All-Russian Union of Actors, which was afterwards turned, because the word "actor" seemed too aristocratic, into the "Professional Union of Workers in Theatrical Undertakings," I was a producer of experience in America, and, since the revolution, at which time I was supposed to have returned thither,

in Russia. These papers were not only valuable as an addition to my passport, but gave me the right to obtain bread and provisions as a member of the second category—that is, a quarter of a pound of bread a day and an occasional dole of salt herrings and half-rotten potatoes, whereas the third category used to get ⅛ lb. of bread and practically nothing else. To complete my disguise, I grew a fine beard and cultivated a Boston accent.

My first professional job was to look for a theatre at Saratov for a company from Moscow, with the idea in my head of getting through to the Czecho-Slovaks and thence to Vladivostok. In this I failed, because the theatres at Saratov had been formed into a close ring controlled by the Arts Section of the local Soviet, which, under cover of pompous phrases about revolutionary ideas, was staging average drawing-room melodrama and the usual Russian classics that had done duty for the past several seasons. A third-rate young actor, who by intrigue and coarse activity had obtained the post of Commissar of the Theatres, kept the best parts for himself and received callers with a revolver on the table. He would not hear of "The Land of Promise"—"only of interest to English misses," he sneered. "Do you think our workmen need to be taught anything by these Canadians?" I privately thought they could be taught a good deal, but held my peace. "L'Aiglon" was "imperialistic." Hervieu's "Théroigne de Méricourt"; "counter-revo-

lutionary," Zola's "Thérèse Raquin" had "no ideals," Ibsen was "bourgeois." The real point was that Comrade Basiligo was determined not to have any competition for the multitudinous but very inferior strength he had collected round him. Most naturally so. He had the finest house in the town for his "section," free quarters, the patronage of six theatres, renamed Karl Marx Theatre, Engel's Theatre, Theatre of the Revolution, etc., and any amount of money to squander. He had killed a genuine working man's theatrical club which objected to his tutelage, and was not now going to allow anything that might show up his mediocrity. Saratov was so crowded in the autumn of 1918, by reason of the food situation being somewhat easier than at Petrograd or Moscow, that, although complaint was freely made of the inferior fare provided, the theatres were crowded; nevertheless, I was informed that Comrade Basiligo managed to declare a substantial deficit, which the Soviet paid out of the pockets of the "bourgeois."

My next experience was in Petrograd with a so-called "collective." That any actor should be possessed of outstanding merit or be a special attraction to the public is contrary to the communistic theory that no one is better than the worst; consequently companies formed round leading actors theoretically shared alike in profits and losses. In reality all members of our collective were paid separately by the management. Here I worked for some two months with

one or two weeks of rest, and very hard work it was. I was engaged as producer, but since the entire staff consisted of the stage manager, electrician, and two workmen, it was imperative to do a great deal besides. Russian actors, for instance, do not attend to their own entrances, but are sent on by the stage-manager; and when the latter fell ill with pneumonia there was nobody else to do this but me. This sounds as if the theatre was a very miserable one: in fact, it was one of the smartest in Petrograd, being situated half-way up the Nevsky Prospect, exactly opposite the State Theatre. Such conditions were general. Several theatres remained altogether closed for want of stage hands and through friction with the companies. Ours had the advantage of a good medium-sized stage, excellent lighting, and an elegant auditorium; it was formerly an extremely popular house, but before we came it had fallen on evil days, uninteresting programmes and want of stage control having almost quite driven the public away. The bill was now changed every week, the stage got up with taste, and a certain amount of unity and drive instilled into the company, with the gratifying result that big audiences soon began to flock to the theatre. On Saturdays we regularly had the "House Full" boards out. The audiences were mostly composed of "Comrades," that is, soldiers, house-porters, workmen, persons serving in various conciliar institutions, and a fair sprinkling of sailors. Of the old-fashioned theatre-going public

there were but few, which is not surprising, since the upper and middle classes were exactly those that had least money to spend, whereas the Comrades could "blew" two hundred roubles on refreshments between the acts without turning a hair. The first row of the stalls cost twenty-four roubles, and there was nothing cheaper than ten. Moreover, almost everyone more or less rigged himself out in plebeian attire, as the best way to avoid unpleasant attention from the crowd, so that if educated persons were present they were not easy to pick out from the rest.

The collection was distinctly motley. All actors who could had fled from Petrograd, though, in fact, the food situation was little better in the provinces, and sometimes worse at Moscow, and those of any talent who remained and were at liberty asked staggering salaries, since on anything less life was barely possible. The management, therefore, had recourse to makeshifts. Some were fair, but when it turned out that the young lead was a comedian under middle size and nearly over middle age, steps had to be taken. A substitute was found in an amateur who was assistant commissar in the Petrograd Military Commissariat, but not, he hastened to assure us, a Bolshevik by conviction—only because he would otherwise have starved. He had a nice appearance and was willing to work hard, which few minor Russian actors are, but he had to be taught his part line by line, intonation by intonation, how to sit, stand, move, in fact, everything

from the beginning of the alphabet. His worst point was an unconscious rolling of his head and a jerk at the knee that made me think of a demented gollywog. But in the end we mastered even this, and he made such improvement that by the second week he had ceased to be a nuisance and by the fourth was emboldened to strike for a higher salary, which he got to the tune of four hundred roubles a week.

Rehearsing every day and directing the stage at night was hard work enough in itself, but when there were added to this the imperative tasks of standing in the queue for bread in the morning, dashing to get a few pounds of vegetables through the favour of an acquaintance in some commissariat, or shouldering a sack of potatoes through the streets that the superintendent of a district supply committee had, with enormous generosity, illicitly sold one, it will be seen that life on a meagre and monotonous fare of boiled salt herring, all too few potatoes, a morsel of bread, no butter, no sugar, no milk, and unlimited weak tea was not altogether exhilarating, especially when it is observed that the theatre was almost stone cold. The chief of our collective was indefatigable in getting additions to the food supply, insisting that admirers should bring bread or rye instead of flowers, and on one occasion getting leave to buy a substantial amount of fish, chocolate, and caviare—very expensive, it is true, but good food, and what a treat!—from the central supply committee. Most trying were the dress

rehearsals, for which work, of course, began earlier and ended later than ordinary, and, as it is difficult to get the average Russian actor to see the necessity of dressing and making-up for the occasion, there was always an extra expenditure of nerves and temper. On one occasion the young lead was over an hour late, the electrician had gone away, the orchestra and the carpenter did not come at all, and the stage manager was ill; I had to set and light the stage entirely by myself and give the music cues from the stalls. The only food to be obtained was tea from the watchman at a rouble a glass, or two if you had a lump of sugar, and rye cakes the size of a mouthful, fried in castor oil, at five roubles apiece.

Perhaps the most interesting event in the period was the so-called "week of poverty," when representatives of "committees of poverty" from the country came to Petrograd for a congress and were given passes to the theatres. There did not look to be much poverty about them, for they were huge, hulking fellows, much more substantially clad, and above all much better fed, than the poor *intelligentsia* of Petrograd. We were playing "La Dame aux Camélias," which would not perhaps be expected to appeal to this class of audience. In fact, it packed the theatre and held "the poor" enthralled. What fetched them was evidently the splendour of Marguerite Gautier's life, the magnificence of her gowns, the lace and silken luxury of her bed in the last act. Champagne, liqueurs, cards,

evening dress, the quarrel between Armand and Varville: all this must have been the top-notch of experience to them, more incredible and fabulous than Monte Cristo to a boy. They were very silent, but attentive. Once a man tried to make a row, demanding a different sort of entertainment; but he was promptly suppressed by his neighbours. The only other sign of disapproval I saw was when a peasant who had been sitting quite quietly got up at the beginning of Act V and went out, saying that he could see his wife in bed three hundred and sixty-five nights in the year, and didn't think it interested him to have the performance repeated on the stage. Indeed, the only objection to "the poor" was the overpowering odour they brought into the theatre. It did not finally disappear till some days after their week was over.

Twice during this time I had had what might have been narrow shaves of discovery. After the stage manager had been ill for a week a substitute was engaged. He turned out to be a Jewish comedian who had recently fulfilled an engagement at the Empire, in Leicester Square. He spoke English well and knew London, so that I had to conjure up a sublime ignorance of my native Cockneydom, and to feign ignorance successfully is much harder than to pretend to knowledge. Here my American accent served me well, for it was strange to the newcomer and enabled me to carry off the fiction that I had only been in London thrice. A much greater danger was when a well-

known Bolshevik commissar, with whom I was acquainted before the revolution, turned up at the theatre one evening. Had he learnt that there was a Lettish producer, and that this same producer was I, all would have been up, but he assumed that I had leave to live openly as an Englishman, and obviously never dreamed that I was in hiding from the Red Guards. So this passed all right. The third and last time that I was in danger was within an ace of being fatal. At what precise moment my impresario, who was a Pole and a clever, educated man, began to suspect me, I do not know, but when he got an inkling he bided his time. He learnt that I was intending to slip over the border into Finland and discovered the means I was about to take. When I gave up my work at the theatre after Christmas he kept in touch with me, and on the eve of my starting denounced me. Afterwards I discovered that he was a professional Bolshevik informer. The Bolsheviks keep the theatre going and make actors relatively comfortable, on the principle of *panem et circenses*—if they have not enough bread to give the people, at least let them have more shows; but within it keep control not only through their recognised commissars and delegates, but by secret spies, who nose out and hunt down possible enemies.

CHAPTER VIII

MY LAST JOURNEY

In the middle of December, 1918, I had occasion to go from Petrograd to Saratov. At ordinary times this is not an undertaking that would call for any special mention. From Petrograd to Moscow would be a night's journey of ten hours, and thence the last train leaving at 4 p.m. would reach Saratov in nineteen hours more. There would be nothing more difficult than in a journey from, let us say, Torquay to Inverness; a good deal slower, to be sure, but much more comfortable.

Under the Bolshevik *régime*, however, it was another thing. In the first place, no one has the right to travel at all without first obtaining special permission from the Council of Workmen's, Peasants', and Red Army men's deputies of the district, and to get such a permission it was necessary to submit cogent reasons, as for instance, that you were going home to live in your native place, or that your wife and family were dying, or, better still, that you were bound on business

for some Conciliar or Red Army institution. Armed with this permission, you must then go to the district supply committee, and fill out a form to the effect that you were leaving the town and wished to give up your bread card, reserving the right to get it back on your return; thence to your co-operative, where the bread card would be surrendered in exchange for a certificate that you had given it up; with which finally a ticket might be purchased at the station. This whole proceeding as far as the station, would, owing to delays, mistakes, the difficulty of finding the right "Comrade" to whom to apply, and his mulish ill-will, once found, absorb at least three or four days; while to get a ticket and, a ticket having been got, to get a seat on a train would take an indefinite time, quite incalculable beforehand, that might run on, in unfavourable circumstances, into weeks. In the second place, the time occupied by travelling might under Bolshevik management easily be doubled.

Four days, however, were not mine to waste, to say nothing of weeks, for I needed to be back in Petrograd by Christmas. By going at once I ought to be able to manage this. Say that the journey would take three days each way instead of the former thirty-eight hours, to allow for breakdowns and delays, three days to do my business at Saratov, and I should be back by Boxing Day or thereabouts. Therefore, to avoid the initial delay, I had recourse to stratagem. To get a certificate from my professional union—since to

belong to a professional union was almost a necessity of life, certainly a necessity for obtaining the smallest comfort and security in life—was a measure in any case dictated by prudence; for, even with permission and ticket, there was no knowing how many obstructions would occur on the road. It would also enable me to get my permission from the Council without an exasperating amount of trouble. Two professional friends signed an application for me, stating that I was bound on professional business, and this being slightly changed by an amiable official in the typewriting, blossomed out into an authority to travel on behalf of the Union itself, and a request signed by the chairman to all "Governmental and social institutions to afford assistance to" the bearer. The next step was the permission to leave the town. Here a block took place, for on going to the District Council I discovered it to be in a condition of flux. in other words, removing from one building to another. This is a common habit of such august bodies, which sometimes change their place of abode so often that it takes a day or two even to find them. Their reasons are obscure, but probably connected with a certain diminution in the furniture that is observed little by little to take place; when the number of tables, chairs, and cupboards has been reduced to the lowest limit of decency by depredations on the part of the staff, who think they would better grace their own flats, the institution finds cause to move to another habitation,

where the same game begins anew. Besides, during the move there is ample opportunity for such minor objects as typewriters and a few reams of paper to vanish without trace. To me the present move was annoying, because no business would be done for at least two days. Fortunately, however, among my papers I discovered an old pass from Moscow to Petrograd and back, by judiciously altering the date of which I was able, without waiting for a fresh permit, to apply at once for a ticket. It only remained to get the latter for me to be off.

Easier said than done, however, to get a railway ticket in Russia in December, 1918. The stations were thronged. The offices of the "Commission for Evacuating" Petrograd were besieged by crowds that spent day and night in front of them. People waited for weeks for an opportunity to get tickets. Commissionaires with means of obtaining them by the back door charged five or six hundred roubles for a seat to Moscow. In these circumstances I did what experience had often shown to be the most effective course: I asked a Jewish acquaintance to get my ticket for me. How this remarkable race manages, no one knows, but it is a fact that Jews are always able to get railway tickets, and never have to stand in food queues. And, sure enough, on the morrow I had a ticket to Saratov and a reserved seat to Moscow, without having to pay more than a few roubles above the proper rate. For food I took ten grilled herrings,

two tins of sprats, relics of a better time, a pound of bread bought at the price of twenty-two roubles, and a few small rye scones. It was likely that what I could take would have to last me to my journey's end.

Until Moscow nothing of note occurred. Starting at 7 p.m., we arrived the next day at half-past two, and, all things considered, nineteen and a-half hours for four hundred miles was not to be grumbled at. Two-thirds of the way to Moscow our locomotive, which was a goods engine, gave out, and was replaced by one detached from a train coming in the opposite direction on the demand of some conciliar bigwig on our train, according to the practice of the Naval commissar, the sailor Dybenko, the husband of Kalontin, when his train broke down. But for some potent presence we should have been left in the position of the unfortunates going to Petrograd—stranded, probably, until the next day. As it was, we triumphantly completed our journey and pulled into the Nicolas Station at Moscow on an exquisite afternoon, with the glass about zero.

My idea had been to call at the Sleeping Car Co.'s office in crossing the city to the station for Saratov, and to beg for some sort of a paper to the conductor of the sleeping car on the four o'clock, this being, with its pendant in the opposite direction, the last train in Russia, outside one each way on the Petrograd-Moscow line, to boast of such a luxury. An hour and a-half, however, was all the time left, so I decided not to

risk it, but to arrange matters with the conductor in person. The brisk frost and bright sun made the drive delightful; and all for a mere eighty roubles—I began to feel that the gods were with me. As, however, is usually the case when one allows himself the luxury of this feeling in Russia, I was doomed to disappointment. On arriving at the Saratovsky Station I found a crowd besieging the doors, which were shut. No one was even admitted without a ticket, and even those with tickets had considerable difficulty. Having circumvented this obstacle by an illicit entrance through the third-class exit, an elderly porter of irritable temper told me that the train had been altered to 4.30, and that the sleeping car had been taken off. The last one had run two days before. The porter wanted to know what I would do. Had I a ticket? I said No, but I had a pass from the Council. Quite useless, unless I got it exchanged for a seat by the stationmaster, he rejoined, and then I should probably not go on that day; scores of people had been waiting for three or four days. The stationmaster, on search being made, was not to be found. His office was open, but empty and deserted as well by his assistant and the clerks who commonly are to be found there. A glance at the booking office showed the futility of applying there; about three hundred people were waiting already, and as it would only open half an hour before the time of the train, not more than fifty would probably get served. The entrance to the

platform was scarcely less crowded, but, to the bewilderment of the porter, who thought me mad, I sent him through the barrier by his own gate and got as close as I could to the passengers' wicket, which was guarded by two sailors, their belts jangling with bombs, an armed railway guard, and two ticket collectors. After a half-hour's wait, enlivened by the usual squabbles among the Comrades, the train slowly backed into the station. It was an exclusively "platzkartug" train, that is, all the seats were numbered and had been distributed to passengers armed with proper authorities from their Councils, and, of course, with tickets. On the appearance of the train we, the crowd, began to heave and plunge, each one fearing—and with justice—that somebody else would get his allotted seat. Individuals, perhaps like myself without tickets, began to make rushes at the gate, only to be thrust back by the guards with much objurgation. Soon the latter lost patience, and began to threaten with their rifles, and, this proving of no avail, one incontinently fired into the air. The crowd, though accustomed enough to such ebullitions, gave back automatically; on which I, advancing, waved my entirely invalid papers in the ticket collector's face and passed through at the exact moment when his attention was concentrated on repelling the next charge of the crowd. Once on the platform the rest was easy. I sought out the head guard, known in Russia as "the chief of the train," and explained that

I was on urgent Conciliar business, that I had not had time to get a seat ticket but had a pass, and asked if I could take a spare seat, supposing there was one. "By all means," was the answer, and until this was seen I could stand in the passage. This was all I hoped, and now, having authority on my side, I propped myself as comfortably as I could in a corner and waited for the train to move out, as it did in a few minutes more.

In the corridor besides myself were five others, the overflow after all the seats had been filled, eight passengers going to a compartment intended by the coach-builders for four. It appeared, however, that they had seat tickets, but that their seats were in a compartment commandeered by the engine driver's substitute, should a substitute be wanted on the journey, and his mate, who had put up a notice that the compartment was for their sole use and locked the door. This the legitimate seat-holders resented, and, dozing the while, I was aware of a prolonged argument between their spokesman, the chief of the train, and the engineers in possession. After disputing the point for about an hour, the latter suddenly caved in and vanished, grumbling, with their traps, to the decent triumph of the victors. They only being five, a clear right existed for a sixth passenger to take a seat, and the party promptly acceded to my request for leave to be that sixth. Among my fellow travellers, I discovered, was a teacher in the Military-Medical Academy, who had held an appointment at Tver and was

now being moved to Astrakhan. Travelling with him were his wife, two daughters, and a girl friend, a young woman of four- or five-and-twenty, who was employed in a supply committee in Moscow. She had taken the opportunity of her friends going to Astrakhan to obtain a fortnight's leave, nominally on account of health, and to pay a flying visit to her parents, who lived there. Our conversation during the evening was confined to the usual politenesses, since in the land of the Bolsheviks one must be careful with strangers, and the others were, moreover, well occupied in discussing a supper such as I had not seen for many months. They had friends, I gathered, in the country near Tver, and were provided with apparently inexhaustible supplies of bread, eggs, chicken, cold buck-wheat porridge, cutlets, rye cakes, honey, tea, and coffee, and talked, as was inevitable, of food without stopping. Like every experienced Russian traveller, I had tea, with which I washed down two herrings and a small piece of bread flavoured with mustard. Save for a plate of water-soup at Moscow, I had had nothing since a precisely similar meal in the morning.

Our night passed in comparative luxury. True, the carriage was filthy, the material had long since been ripped from the seats, there were no cushions, and, of course, no lighting; but we were only six, and could stretch ourselves, one above and two below, each side of the compartment. Several attempts to enter it at wayside stations were coun-

tered by the opposition of the army lecturer, who, sliding the door an inch, insisted that the carriage was full, and then shut it before his statement could be verified. As we proceeded the weather got worse and the train slower. Snow had begun to fall soon after we left Moscow, and the air was now filled with powdery, dry flakes. This is the worst kind of snow for a train to make its way through. Heavy, wet flakes afford opposition that is surmountable, but when the snow is dry it begins to drift and clog the wheels. The wind was getting up, and the train ploughed its way along with bumps and jerks. When day broke, the wind had increased and was blowing a gale from the south, with a temperature of five degrees above zero Fahrenheit. Boiling water at wayside stations was not plentiful and food non-existent, but at one o'clock I got a handful of pieces of dried bread from a returned prisoner of war to add to my slender store. He had with him a large bag of it, the bread, moreover, being of excellent quality, which did not look much as if there was starvation in Germany, whence it had come. So we went all day. I had brought with me "La Vie de Mlle. Clairon," by Edmond de Goncourt, in which there is, luckily, a great deal of reading, for it was to be my sole intellectual entertainment for several days. At seven o'clock we reached Kozlov, the junction between the Saratov, Samara, and Voronesh lines. Kozlov is, in all my experience of travelling

in Russia, the most infuriating place. There are always long delays there, always a great crowd going in all directions, and the station is mean and was always badly supplied. We now arrived fifteen hours late, and stuck there. And now another piece of luck came my way. I had finished my herrings and bread, and was faced by a cheerless prospect indeed, when getting out to prowl about I ran into a young peasant with a large loaf of black bread, weighing perhaps eighteen pounds. Everywhere travellers and townsmen were hunting for what you only realise to be indeed the staff of life when you have not got it, and everywhere in vain. The few people who had bread were keeping it for themselves; so it seemed still more providential that my peasant was willing to sell. With the loaf hidden under his sheepskin coat, he beckoned me into the dark outside the station, where there was less chance of detection by Red Guards; secretly, under the falling snow, we struck the bargain, and for the sum of eighty roubles, nominally worth £8 and formerly the tenth part of a first-class civil servant's monthly salary, I obtained the prize. I struggled back through a seething mass of humanity to the train. The corridor was packed with newcomers camping on their luggage, and there was a general air of damp and discomfort. At night the carriage became horribly stuffy, and bugs, probably imported by the fresh arrivals, were active. We covered the window with overcoats, so as to prevent

the crowd from seeing our relatively few numbers, which had they realised they would have probably broken the glass and invaded us, movement along the corridor being almost impossible. At 1.30 a.m. the train with an immense effort plunged out of the station. Joy and relief were, however, doomed to disappointment; for after a long stop just outside Kozlov, we came back into the station on another line.

The next day was Sunday. Snow was still falling, but there was no wind, and rumour, the only source of information, had it that we should go on at four o'clock. But when four came and five and six o'clock, and there was no change except the arrival of two other trains from the direction of Moscow, my companions and I began to fear further delay. The wind was rising again, and the dreaded word *metél* was on all lips. The *tourmente de neige metél*, blizzard, call it what you will, is the terrible Russian snowstorm that, swirling round and round, blots everything from view, creeps, mounts, pours over everything till everything is buried, renders direction impossible to find, and in the days of carriage travelling counted many victims who were caught in its grip. It is a pall of white, a monstrous, moving infinite screen of hard white particles, a crushing weight of white, a wilderness of white, a weariness of white, a terror of white, a white death. Pushkin and Tolstoy have described it and Colonel

Burnaby lived through it. Now we were at the wretched station of Kozlov and the *metél* had caught us. The district north of Tambov, which lay ahead, has a bad reputation in this respect, and the end of December is a bad time. Outside the snow fell incessantly, or seemed rather to blow from every quarter of the heavens, going round and round as if indeed it had been brushed by some giant besom, which is what *metél* implies. On the platform it was some eight inches deep and in the sidings was forming into deep banks. It was hoped, however, that we should get away on the morrow, but my companions, who had only reckoned on a three days' journey and had recklessly consumed their supplies, were getting nervous about food. For the moment, however, they had enough to go round. I munched my bread with a touch of mustard, as economically as I could, and opened one of my two tins of sprats. Boiling water for tea was obtainable in abundance close to our train from a boiler in a hut of its own specially arranged to this end, and we all had a sufficiency of tea.

During the day our carriage, till now agreeably empty, had become filled up with the overflow from the passage, where a Jewish family from Rogachev, in the government of Mogilev, had strewed themselves and their effects just opposite us. It is noticeable that under Bolshevik conditions, hardly anyone but Jews and Red Army people travel. Like our-

selves, this party were going to Saratov. First the mother joined us, then her son, a youth of nineteen or twenty, and later one or other of the several cousins who made up their party. They were restless companions and kicked a great deal in their sleep, but the bugs had fortunately moved on to pastures new. I had by this time had ample opportunity to become acquainted with my fellow-travellers. No one in Russia, especially on a railway journey, has any side about them, and when we had overcome our initial suspicion of each other, we soon got on good terms. The army lecturer was a quiet, common-sensible man who had travelled in many parts of Russia, and had served in the railway administration before he took to his present profession. He was, it need hardly be said, strongly opposed to the Bolsheviks, but had to be careful how he said so, especially as the next *coupé* to ours was crowded with Red Army men. The main subject of conversation was, when should we get on? But, once off this, talk ranged, as is usual in Russia, over all things in heaven and earth. Where had I come from? What was I doing? Oh, I was a Lett! Then was I a Bolshevik? No? I had only come back to Russia after the Revolution! I had lived in America! How was it that the Americans, who loved liberty, could support the Bolshevik tyranny? My only answer was that they did not understand. Then ensued animated discussions on art and the theatre, always

broken by excursions for hot water and hopes of the train's departure.

But next morning brought no movement—only thicker snow, though with less wind. The carriage was getting disgustingly damp and dirty and the food problem weighed on everyone's spirits. However, our position was better than that of passengers in some of the other trains, which still continued to arrive from the north, yet others being stranded ahead of us. From one of these the passengers had come back in the evening, we now heard, trudging fifteen versts through the storm, with the report that they had left sixty people in the train, many of them women and children, without fire or water. Our train at least was warmed, and we could get boiling water. The Reds next door had gone out to hunt for food, and presently came back in triumph, having obtained 26 lb. of bread, 20 lb. of meat, 36 lumps of sugar, cabbages and lentils for six men. Fired by their example—since I had breakfasted on bread and a little pork fat given me by the Jews—I set forth about noon with two of the latter and a young lady going to Astrakhan in search of dinner, which it was said could be obtained at the "Conciliar dining-room" of Kozlov. There, as everywhere else in Sovdepia, all hotels and eating-places had long ago been shut up. After twenty minutes' buffeting through the snow, still falling fast, we reached the place and found it packed with Comrades in various

stages of dirt and roughness, with a few decent people among them. Dinner, at 3 Rs. 50 kop., consisted of a plate of thin horse bouillon with a lump of the meat thrown into it by the cook's fingers, a small plate of porridge, and a little bread. The soup was one of the horridest things I remember to have eaten, and the dirt of the place such that our company with one accord determined, come what might, we would never go there again. Interesting as it was to study the habits of the natives of Kozlov, our repast was evidently not going to satisfy anyone for many hours. We therefore determined to scatter and scour the town for food. The two Jews went together and the Miss Astrakhan with me, and for two hours we plunged through deep snow round the outskirts of the town, asking every peasant who was to be found where we could buy bread. The invariable answer was that there was none in the town, but that some might perhaps be found at the village of Donskoe Selo, two versts away on the banks of the river Don. What is two versts? A mere stroll of a mile and a half. But when that mile and a half is snowed under to a depth of two or three feet and a fifteen mile an hour breeze is wafted across its frozen surface, the scene is changed. We sadly turned back, our boots full of snow, hungry and tired, knocking at every peasant house in the faint hope of finding something. At one I found seven peasants making a dinner that consisted exclusively of boiled potatoes; they most

generously passed me one with their fingers—and when I say "they," I mean that the white, floury ball, whose like I had not seen for several days, was passed from hand to hand until it reached me, and most delicious it was. Hope had been abandoned of getting any substantial addition to the larder, when we ran into a boy with a bag. It is astonishing how appetising a bag may look if you are very hungry. Of course, there may not be food in it; but then, again, there may be. This time, as if by magic, there was food in the bag, and that food was bread, about twenty pounds, of which, with a truly Samaritan spirit, the youth sold us six. And then, oh wonder! A little woman who had been drawing water from the pump hard by, actually asked if we wanted food, and being answered, bade us follow to her house a few minutes distant. Her husband, it turned out, was a railway servant—an admirable class in Russia—and she had immediately spotted us as wayfarers stranded in the storm. Their home was clean and looked almost incredibly comfortable after the growing filth of the train, but although they pressed Miss Astrakhan to come back for the night and bring her girl friend with her, it was impossible to accept, since no one knew what time the train might go! But, filth or no filth, we had got food, three pounds more bread from our new friends, making nine in all, and three fat herrings, with which we went back in triumph. On comparing notes with the two others,

we found that they had not only discovered and bought nearly twenty pounds more bread, but had unearthed a Jewish cobbler's where they had had dinner of soup, goose, bread, jam, and tea, all for twenty-five roubles. The herrings, however, shed a glory that could not be dimmed, and though I abominate raw herrings myself, they were quickly devoured by the company, to their great delectation.

On the evening of this, the fourth day, the snow stopped and the wind fell; and at eight o'clock a smart train came into the station from the south. At first reported to be Trotsky's train, it soon turned out that a less exalted but nevertheless an important personage was on board it, in the shape of the military commissar of the Southern front, Vladimirov, whom we could see in his car making a hearty meal by the light of numerous candles, while we sat supperless by the light of our single dip. Worse still, the hopes raised by the appearance of the train that traffic had been resumed were quickly dashed by the news that Vladimirov's train on its southward journey had been snowed up half-way between Kozlov and Tambov and had now returned to the former haven after being extricated only with great difficulty. Night set in with a shade of extra depression, that was not relieved by one of the young Jews who had been foraging having contracted a feverish chill. But what was this to the state of our spirits on awaking to the news that the station was on fire!

Heavy clouds of steam began to mingle with the snow, deepening at intervals to a pall of smoke through rents in which the yellow heart of the fire was occasionally visible. We were drawn up at No. 1 platform, and for a time in some danger from the flames, which, having started in the fourth-class waiting-room, were spreading through the third to the first just opposite us. At about 9 a.m., however, Vladimirov's train was hauled out to a siding, and ours followed. Here we remained all day with scarcely anything to eat but bread and my mustard, and, worst of all, only cold tea from the day before to drink, the big boiler at the station being left untended in the general confusion till evening, when a fresh brew was achieved. Nor was the boiler only allowed to get cold, but our train also, with the result that by early morning we were all shivering instead of being, according to the usual practice, parboiled. For the habit on our train was to stoke the stoves at night till they could hold no more and not to touch them during the day, with the result that, while by day everything grew cool and to a certain extent dried up, at night the walls and roof dripped moisture, and large pools of damp filth formed on the floor.

It was to this picture that I woke on Christmas Day, and breakfasted on bread and cold water. The night had been poor and disturbed by the Hebrew mother imitating the demon of whom Dante writes:

Ed egli avea cul fatto trombetta. The whole of this family was very restless, and relieved themselves by spitting and blowing their noses on to the floor. One spark of comfort, however, and indeed much more than comfort, for it was actual salvation, was ours; on the representations of certain railwaymen travelling on the train, it was begun again to be heated. All round us other trains were drawn up, almost heaped up, in the yard, many carriages with broken windows, blocked up insufficiently with sacking or paper. The suffering in these must have been intense. A railway servant informed me that there had been eighteen serious cases of frost-bite among the passengers on Christmas Eve, and six the day before that. If this was at the station, what happened to the trains caught further down the line? That no one ever knew, but it was reported that one train, chiefly filled with Russian prisoners of war returning from Germany, was wholly snowed under, and every soul in it lost. The storm had now stopped, but the general situation remained dispiriting and obscure. Decrees were affixed all over the station and town, commanding all the civil population under pains and penalties to fall to and clear the line from snow, but so far these seemed to have had little effect. It was at least obvious that we should not move till evening. So at ten o'clock Nicolai Fedorovich, three of the Jews, and I sallied forth to hunt for food. The day was brilliant and the invigorating air made our long

search agreeable, but after fruitless application to three institutions for leave to buy something for the women in the train our spirits again dropped. We had stumped the snow for two hours and so far got nothing. Relief, however, often comes at the unexpected moment, and on our homeward path the inventive young Israelite bethought him of visiting his friend the cobbler. He left the rest of us on the pavement to admire the local Comrades tittuping up and down the main street on horseback while respectable middle-aged citizens were made to clean the streets, and dived into a maze of small courts and alleys, from which he emerged ten minutes later to beckon us after him. Our pace had sunk to about a mile an hour, and after a touch of fever following my expedition in the snow I was so weak that I had to lean against a wall for fear of fainting. Our guide took us in a devious way, ending with a succession of dark cellars from which we passed into a well-lit underground cobbler's workshop. No Aladdin descending into the earth could have found gems of more marvellous worth than the meal we found set before us—cabbage soup, beef, and potatoes cooked in oil, wheatmeal porridge, unlimited bread and tea with a sweet instead of sugar. I had not seen such a meal for months. Our host, who charged a very moderate 20 Rs. a head, wanted to emigrate to Kansas City, where he had a sister; he had lived in Riga before the war and bitterly regretted that he

had not emigrated then. In my character of a Lettish political refugee who had been educated abroad, I sang the praises of America. Success brings success, and good luck its fellow. On the way back to the train I went round to the friendly railwayman and was rewarded with five lb. of bread, three of potatoes, and three herrings, which, with the pots of meat and porridge we had taken for the women, would make a serious supply for the morrow. The excellent young fellow was sitting at home with a bandage over his eyes, having been touched by smoke in helping to put out the fire. It had been caused, he said, by an incendiary in order to burn a mass of compromising documents concerning the activity of the "supply detachment" of Kozlov, nominally there to accelerate food transport, the brigandage of which had been notorious throughout the summer. As for the Bolsheviks, he had no words too bad for them. He and a friend had bought two hundred lb. of pork, intending it to last them through the winter. They had paid the peasants 1,500 Rs. for it, but the local "Committee of Poverty" had found and requisitioned it, and paid for only a hundred and twenty lb. at less than 3 Rs. per lb., so that he and his friend lost their food, their trouble, and 750 Rs. into the bargain. When would there be a change? he wanted to know. Everyone was longing to get rid of the tyrants, but who could do anything? It was the English who must come and

save Russia. Formerly people were keen to go to meetings; now no one went. Who wanted to hear speeches when they were only thinking of food and there was none? It is indeed a testimony to the character of the Bolshevik rule that there should be hunger at Kozlov, which is the centre of the meat-producing district of Russia. Returning to the station, I found our train had moved again and was now only a few yards from the boiler for water, a great convenience. A crowd was collected round the boiler-house, laughing and shouting at a large hen pheasant which had perched on top of it, and was solemnly sitting there in above four inches of snow, doubtless for the warmth that percolated upwards. Presently a boy climbed up to dislodge her, and she whirred off with an immense clatter and chuckling towards the trees.

Thus another night passed and led to breakfast, consisting of two potatoes from yesterday and a few slices of dried apples given me by the Jews, who seemed to have everything, but in small and remote parcels. Our carriage was by now filthy with damp crumbs, scraps of food, and all the refuse of human life in crowded and unhealthy circumstances. By dispensation of Providence the mirror and tap in the lavatory had escaped the general fate of the train fittings, so that washing on an exiguous scale was possible, despite the accumulated filthy swamp in the lavatory compartment. It was Boxing Day, and

as a gift from the gods we were led to expect that the train would at last move, when a further visitation befell us. Exactly at three o'clock, when everyone was panting with excitement and expectation, there appeared two Reds with fixed bayonets, and, despite all protests, they cleared out our carriage for the benefit of four Red officers, turning all its occupants and our baggage pell-mell into the corridor. The eldest of the four, when they appeared, was not more than twenty-two, and on the faces of all of them was stamped the mark of the beast. As the women delayed in tears over their traps, the Red heroes almost flung them out of the door. This, despite a recent decree of the Central Council that no military officers should meddle with the railway administration. However, there was nothing to be done. The army lecturer, himself travelling on urgent Conciliar business, went in high anger to complain to the Commandant of the station, who replied that it was merely a case of armed bullying, but said that, if he attempted to interfere, the only result would be that he would be shot. The four heroes than went off to supper and the cinema, having had the door of the carriage locked so that no one could profit by it during their absence. It was noticeable, moreover, that they were the only people who, in squeezing along the corridor, never asked a " By your leave."

At three o'clock we stood with two engines ready

to pull out. An hour later it was reported that a snow-plough, sent ahead to clear the road, had broken down, and that the train would not leave at earliest until next day. The weather was getting warm, and under the roof of the station platform there were not more than 13° F. of frost; but up to now no train had succeeded in going either way. At eight o'clock Vladimirov's train set out for Moscow, and at midnight a message came that *this* was stuck. We were, in fact, in a complete fix, unable to move in any direction or to do anything but wait and hope that the best would not turn out to be the worst.

The corridor, already crowded with humans and luggage, was reduced by our exodus into it—nine more people and all their luggage—to a state of impossible block, in which we were dozing as best we could, propped up against one another, when at 5.20 a.m. the train pulled out without warning and proceeded slowly but steadily through a snowy waste. We were going now northwards, intending to follow the loop line via Riagsk and Penza, thus avoiding Tambov, where the greatest block of snow was reported. When, however, one speaks of a block of snow, it is to be understood that, although the storm had been of great violence, it would not in the old days have meant more than a delay of perhaps twenty-four hours, and in Scotland or America the line would have been cleared in perhaps a quarter of the time by the use of a rotary snow-plough. But

at Kozlov, one of the principal railway junctions in Sovdepia, at a time when it was urgent beyond everything else for the Bolsheviks to keep open their communications between Moscow and the front, there was no rotary snow-plough, nor even the ordinary article in decent repair—only one old broken plough and hand labour. The bourgeois were sent out by their hundreds to clear the line, and dire pains and penalties proclaimed against peasants who refused to do their share; nevertheless, the block kept possession of the railway for a whole week.

From now onwards the journey became more or less normal. That is to say, we took three days and two nights to accomplish a journey which should have been done perhaps in eighteen hours, pigging it—I hope I may be excused the word, but indeed nothing else will describe the situation—in the corridor, getting parsimonious supplies of boiling water for tea at stations, alive with throngs of sackmen who were struggling to go in various directions and appeared likely to struggle for several days more.

This last part of the journey was, however, enlivened by the incursus of an entirely new set of people, who afforded distraction from what had come to be the almost exclusive occupation of the party—watching our Hebrew acquaintances search one another's heads for lice. The best of the newcomers was a sailor who had served on the Archangel front. Learning that I had been in America, he entered into conversation.

He was very anxious to discover from my experience of Americans why the combined English and American forces had not advanced on that front in the summer. They could, he said, have made a push forward and taken Kotlas without the slightest difficulty; the Reds were very weak, and he was amazed at their having held the line. In his sector there were only 300 sailors, and they had to keep moving about as much as possible so as to make the British and the Americans think they were in greater force. He had an immense respect for the Americans' equipment, especially their fur coats, and for the English jam, of which the Reds had captured a considerable quantity, but none whatever for them as fighters. His contempt for their fighting qualities was only mitigated by the fact that, following the example of the Reds, they gave no quarter to prisoners. He himself was an Anarchist and hated the Bolsheviks, who, he predicted, would not last beyond the spring. The Fleet in general, he said, was anti-Bolshevik, and on his own ship only one-third of the crew were Communists, but his muddled intelligence was quite unable to perceive that the only way of making his hatred of the Bolsheviks effective would be if he and his mates refused to serve them any longer. Now he was on his way to Saratov to rescue his things and his mother's cottage from threatened requisition, and was prepared, if necessary, to shoot the whole Council at Saratov, when, if he was arrested, a detachment of his mates would automatically, on the non-

receipt of a telegram from him on a certain day, descend in force and rescue him. Such are the simple methods by which we remedy injustice in Russia.

On the second day of our journey with him an animated conversation took place in our carriage. The sailor was narrating how at Fort Ino 463 hostages were shot in reply to the murder of Uritsky and dug their own graves in the morning, and how in Petrograd over 1,000 suffered the same fate. This was just, he said, on account of excesses wrought by the Junkers and Cossacks. The army lecturer interposed with a reference to Tashkent, where countless cruelties had been committed by the Reds. He was answered by a soldier who said: "Well, and what about what they did in Ukraine? There, 30,000 workmen were shot, and batches of 60 were hanged in the streets of Kiev. We ought to hang all the *intelligentsia* for that—kill them all." Sailor: "Oh, well, Libau, Riga, and Reval will soon be taken in the spring—Libau, oh, yes, before that, that will be very soon, only we must have the army to back up the fleet. And then Warsaw will be in our hands again. And Finland. And then we'll clear all the English out of the north. That's part of the programme, too." Army Lecturer: "And what about the English Fleet in the Caspian Sea?" Sailor: "Oh, we are not afraid of them; we have got a fine fleet of T.B.D.'s. They have been brought down the Volga; they will do for the British, I can tell you."

The lecturer's wife chimed into the conversation,

protesting against the sailor's bloodthirstiness. He only laughed at her, but she was staunch to her point of view. The following conversation ensued:—Lecturer's Wife: "But do you justify the shooting of Professor Rudy of Moscow, who had founded a dental hospital out of his own means, and was taken out of his house and shot for nothing whatever?"

Sailor: "Ah! An old man! What is the use of old men? He probably had a different point of view on politics from ourselves. We must root out all the old structure of life, destroy them all."

Lecturer: "But if you shoot all the older men, who can teach us? Who will educate the younger generation?"

Sailor: "They will educate themselves. I'll teach them."

Lecturer: "How old are you?"

Sailor: "Twenty-two."

Lecturer: "A lot you can teach."

Sailor (contemptuously): "Ah! Don't you be afraid, life will teach us all. The revolution will produce a totally different society."

It must not be supposed that the talk about the revolution producing a new society is genuine. It is simply learned from pamphlets and sketchy Socialist handbooks. Nevertheless, there was a certain freshness and leaning towards independence in my sailor that made him worth encouraging to talk. He had a little book containing the life of Walt Whitman in

pamphlet form, and was excited to know that I had read the poems in the original, and could tell him which were the best. All the last day that we were together in the train furious discussions raged between him and my travelling companions on the subjects of Socialism, Communism, religion, the parasitism of the educated, etc. His mind was like a marsh without any bottom or solidity whereon even a foundation could be laid, but he was young and jolly, which was far better than the self-important and pretentious Bolshevist—an appalling type.

"And India," said the sailor, "that is where the revolution will go. There's a great revolutionary people for you." The main object of the Communist party, he said, was to abolish money, so that all doing physical work should receive actual goods in exchange for it. No other work should be paid, but only manual labour as being the most valuable of all. "How many hours of a peasant's toil go to make bread?" he said. "No money can recompense him for that. He must have goods, and no one must have more than he." There was, at all events, more generosity and liveliness in this than in the views of a small Jewish Red officer, who had an interminable discussion with an anæmic teacher, formerly a priest, who veiled an essentially narrow understanding under cheap irony. The little Jew's argument was that if your opponent was willing to admit that you might be right in principle, then you could agree with him, but if you saw

it was impossible to convince him you could only shoot him: with regret, but still decidedly shoot him.

It was during the last night that the Jews, both civilians and officers, had a poor time. A man in a black fur coat and fur cap had got into our coach and was hobnobbing with a number of Red Army men. He must have been of the peasant class, since he commanded their respect and talked with extreme freedom. His language was forcible; his theme simple—that the whole Bolshevik Revolution was made by the Jews in order to abolish Christianity. All the representative Russians, he said, were arrested or killed—and he instanced a whole string from his own town, Velikie Lugi; but who had ever heard of a Jewish bourgeois or speculator being arrested? For instance, in his own town there was Hirschmann, a millionaire miller and bread merchant, and all his relations, manufacturers and merchants, at liberty and in full enjoyment of opportunities to speculate. To Trotsky he applied a word that has no equivalent in English or, as far as I know, any other European language. It used to be quite unmentionable in polite society; but *autres temps, autres mœurs,* and since the coming of the Bolsheviks "svolotch" is in everyone's mouth. One may say that, on the whole, it means "canaille," only much more so. What was interesting was that only one of the Comrades was against the speaker. The others all noisily approved,

while the Jews huddled up at the end of the corridor listening, in terror of pogroms to come.

And so on the tenth day we arrived at Saratov, where I learnt that on the morning we started from Kozlov the storm had burst out again with renewed vigour and, changing its direction, had followed our train along the Penza line, cutting communication behind us on that route, too. Ours was the only train to get through, and for another four days no train moved on the Moscow-Saratov railway. Six trains were stranded between Kozlov and Tambov, four were held up at Moscow, at Kozlov itself not less than five; and there were places on the line where railway coaches were buried altogether. The situation resulting from the storm was a monumental instance of the inefficiency of the Bolsheviks, who can bully and blaspheme, but are incapable of honest effort themselves or of getting it out of others. Only he who knows the reality, and has seen the reverse of the medal, can gauge the hideous falseness of the Bolsheviks' pretensions; for indeed, without seeing, it is hard to understand how every delicate and generous feeling can wither, every incentive be given to deceit, intrigue, and corruption, and the most ordinary comforts and decencies of civilised human life crumble and vanish under the heavy hand of malice, ignorance, and brutal force.

CHAPTER IX

MY EXIT FROM RUSSIA

On a bitter night of the coldest day of the winter, when the famous "Baptism frost" held Petrograd in its grip, a voice that gave no name spoke to me on the telephone. "We expect you to lunch to-morrow at one." Now, invitations to lunch in Russia were almost as rare in January, 1919, as the blue bird, and had one hearing this invitation seen me sally forth to keep it on the following day he would have thought the luncheon party a strange one indeed; for it took me out of the centre of the town and across the frozen Neva right to the Finland Station, with a bag in my hand and a ticket to the wayside halting place of N. slipped into my pocket by a friend. My host was in the train, too, but he did not look at me, nor I at him, and when we reached our destination he jumped out and started along the hard snow track at such a pace that with my bag I had difficulty in keeping up at the convenient distance behind him at which I had started. It was then that I had the first shock. Less than a hundred yards from the station I was caught up by a

passenger who had sat opposite me in the train and had, I thought, watched me more closely than was comfortable. She was rather commonly dressed, but unmistakably a lady, and had all the way questioned the peasants in our coach as to where she could buy milk, for which purpose she had a large bottle with her. Suddenly she now addressed me in French and asked without preface: "Can you tell me, sir, where it is possible to cross the frontier into Finland?" I answered with all the calm I could muster that I could not. "Ah! I thought, that is, I hoped—I can see you are a gentleman, and not one of those. . . . Can you not help me?" Looked at again, she had the face of an enthusiast, impossible that she should be an *agent provocateur*. Nevertheless, the informer so flourishes under the reign of terror in "Sovdepia," as irreverent Russians beyond its reach term the "Socialist Federative Conciliar Russian Republic," and appears at times under so respectable, not to say aristocratic, a guise, that I decided against a confidence, repeated my former answer, and, parting from the lady, followed my guide round many corners, through a farmyard and into the house, from which he was, in fact, to convey me that night across the frontier into Finland.

For the past four months I had been seeking how to slip through the Bolshevik nets. When in August, 1918, the Sovdep Government suddenly arrested the British and French representatives, I had managed to

get warning in time, and, vanishing from my quarters in Moscow some hours before the Red Guards came to seek me there, obtained false papers and a temporary refuge at a furnished lodging house, in the character of a Lettish political emigrant who had spent all his life (to which were tacked on a few extra years, to save me from the expected mobilisation) in Austria, France, and America, and had returned to Russia only after the revolution. My foreign accent was then accounted for, and a good deal of unnecessary sympathy was wasted on me as a Lett by people who learned that the infamous part played in the history of the revolution by the Lettish rifles did not earn my approval. From my hiding place I was able to continue my work, which consisted in a long-drawn-out liquidation of a refugee children's home and the problem of how to keep it going in conditions conducive to the children's life and welfare, with provisions at fancy prices and every conceivable obstruction placed in the way of British work, until somebody could be found to take it over. My place of abode had occasionally to be changed, and I once had a narrow escape of being caught at the instance of a German spy who got wind of and denounced my whereabouts; but even such a sequestered life was far preferable to the certainty of a Bolshevik prison and the likelihood of a fate similar to that of the French victims in Moscow, who were forced to clean the latrines of the Red Guards, and some were murdered by semi-starvation and disease.

Twice, without revealing my address, I made inquiries through the proper diplomatic channels as to permission to leave the country, only to be told that it was impossible. It remained, therefore, to make my exit without permission. From the end of November onwards, the transfer of the home having been negotiated, I was able to devote my attention to seeking for a way over the Finnish frontier, from the other side of which the Germans had by now been forced to betake themselves back to the Fatherland. To give myself a position, I obtained work as producer at a lively young theatre on the Nevsky Prospect, and, in fact, did a deal of hard work there.[1]

From Petrograd the border of Finland is exceedingly accessible, being but an hour and a-half by train. In the old days it was in much request by political offenders fleeing from the vengeance of autocracy; now it offers asylum to those escaping from a worse tyranny. On the Russian side of the frontier the Finnish peasants, who are a hard-working, orderly race, loathe the Socialist *régime* with its lawlessness and organised robbery, and, as they have the reputation of honest folk, they are good for would-be fugitives to deal with. To approach them, however, directly would be useless, seeing that in a stranger they suspect the informer, and close local knowledge is, moreover, required to light on the man who knows the frontier paths and has the means of guiding along

[1] [See Chap. VII, p. 199 above.]

them. For this purpose it is, therefore, necessary to find an agent who can be relied upon to organise your flight, provide guides, horses, map out the route, survey it beforehand, and keep abreast of the various daily political and military changes that may block one path, open up another, or render all paths suspect and dangerous for perhaps some days at a time. Such a man I had found; there are believed to be several in Petrograd; they ask very large fees, but their expenses are considerable and their business such that they risk their heads momently. Mine was young and energetic, and was reputed to have piloted many persons from barbarism to civilisation. I will call him Ivan Petrovich.

Ivan Petrovich, then, led the way into a clean, well-furnished peasant room, where pots of evergreens, Bible texts on the walls and mountains of white pillows proclaimed its Protestant Finnish proprietor, himself a ruddy-faced man of fifty years. An elderly lady of Swiss nationality was awaiting us, also a candidate for our night excursion, and we had coffee together, cheered by the prospect of escape from the Communist inferno, where no man is free and all go in daily dread of hunger, arrest, and violent injustice. Presently Ivan Petrovich, who had been talking in Finnish to our host, came back with a long face. "You can't go this way; no, absolutely impossible."

"Why, what has happened?"

"The party that set out the day before yesterday has had to stop."

"What, arrested?"

"No," he answered, "but they have had to stop in a village to avoid arrest. We must find a different way. We shall have to put off your going for a couple of days. I will go to ——— this evening and survey a different route, and let you know if you will come to my flat to-morrow."

The little Swiss lady emitted a wail. Could we not really go to-night? She had waited a whole week and was chafing at the delay. "No," he said, "I can't take the responsibility. Of course, if you wish, you can have your deposit back." Which offer, however, she refused, perforce accepting the situation.

Knowing Ivan Petrovich to be a careful man, and that he sent his clients by various and roundabout roads so as to avoid suspicion, there seemed nothing wrong in this. Only some days later, after the catastrophe, I learned the truth that the whole party had been nabbed on the frontier itself, with fatal consequences, and that he concealed this is the only thing with which I could reproach my luckless agent. He now immediately left for Petrograd. I had given up my rooms in the capital and informed their proprietor that I was leaving the day previously for Moscow; I determined to stay the night in the village, and, there being no room in the house where we were, was passed on to a friend. This, as it turned out afterwards,

saved my life. Here more coffee, which is the Finnish national drink, as tea is the Russian, and, considering that it was made from rye and had never seen a coffee-bean, surprisingly good. Delicious, too, was the bread, home baked, with which my simple-minded host, a young railway servant, and his intelligent, comely wife regaled me. They hated the Bolsheviks with all the strength of their souls. "Tell the English to come quickly and save us. Life is becoming impossible. Everywhere these committees, who are nothing but robbers. Even here hunger is beginning because the peasants dare not bring provisions into the village for fear of their being seized by the Reds. If free trade were allowed, there would be plenty for all." "Yes," added he, "do you know, I have always hated the idea of fighting, though I love sport and won the second prize in the big foot race at Krasnoe Selo before the war; but if the Whites come I'll join them and fight to put down the Reds, whatever happens." It is a pathetic link, and indeed the only one, between Russian and Finn that no single man of decent instincts and education is to be met with, who will not put up the same prayer. "Tell the English—tell them everything! Oh, why don't they come? God grant they come in time!"

Next morning broke with radiant sunshine and a temperature risen to zero. The snow, crackling underfoot, glistened in a thousand facets; like a giant fairy pantomime, the woods were built of Christmas-trees,

each branch drooping with its weight of white; it seemed truly as though God might be in His Heaven and all well with the world. The tram took me quickly from the Finland Station to Ivan Petrovich's street, and I went upstairs to his flat in an imprudently gay frame of mind. The door opened in answer to my ring; I stepped in; "Hands up!" and two revolvers were at my head. Further explanation was unnecessary. The little drawing-room had been reduced to a porridge of torn furniture, ripped cushions, crumpled papers, and books; a young ruffian in sailor's uniform was trying on ladies' hats in front of the mirror; and from the bedroom emerged a beetle-browed fellow of Jewish countenance in a soldier's blouse and military breeches, without boots, having evidently just got up from bed. That there had been a perquisition during the night was obvious; the inmates had, of course, been arrested, and now I was caught, too. Resistance was out of the question. A moment of rapid thought, while I was being searched for weapons, gave the uncomforting result that my course must be to appear as unconcerned as possible and try to carry off matters with the surprise of an innocent person, much inconvenienced by delay and impediment to his affairs.

Soon we got down to business.

"Who are you?"

"I am an actor—a producer at the G. Theatre. My passport and certificate of my professional Union are in my pocket-book." The pocket-book and its con-

tents are inspected with, it appears to me, a peculiar interest.

"Why did you want to go to Finland?"

"To Finland?" I echo, with a puzzled air.

"Yes, you have come here to arrange with Ivan Petrovich to take you across the frontier into Finland."

"What should I want to go to Finland for? I am an actor: my work is here; and what connection is there between Ivan Petrovich and Finland?"

"Don't play with us! I am an agent of the X.C. I know all about you. Tell me the truth and it will be better for you; but if you play the fool they have a short way at the Gorohovaya with people like you." It was the black Jew who was questioning me. The X.C., it should be explained, is the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution and Speculation; it is the chief weapon of the Conciliar Government in maintaining and spreading the Red reign of terror, and its headquarters are number 2, Gorohovaya Street, which is the former Prefecture of Police.

"I assure you this is a complete surprise to me," I answered. "Whatever the matter is, I am an entire stranger to it, and, as for Finland, I know nothing about it or about any plans for going there." And I managed to drop under the table my return ticket to N. on the Finnish railway.

"Why did you come to see Ivan Petrovich?"

Ever since entering the flat I had been wondering what answer I could make to this inevitable question; at the crucial moment I had an inspiration.

"He asked me to bring him a few tins of preserved fish. See, there they are." And, in fact, in a little sack with me I had, for use on my journey, three tins of kilki, a species of fish found and cured at Reval, now very difficult to procure in Petrograd.

"Where did you get those from?"

"I had them by me at home."

"Where do you live?"

I gave my old address, which could in any case have been found at the district police office, by means of the stamp on my passport.

"A perquisition will be made there."

"By all means," I said, "I have nothing to hide," and reflected with satisfaction that all my papers and other effects had been cleared out three days before.

"How did you come to know Ivan Petrovich?" was the next question.

"He used to come to the theatre where I am engaged, and was often behind the scenes."

"And so he asked you to sell him these kilki?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you eat them yourself? There's not so much to eat in Petrograd now, is there?"

"I don't like kilki. But, I say, Comrade," for we all are "Comrades" in Petrograd—"couldn't

you let me go now? You can always find me if you want me, at the theatre, or at my address; you have my papers, so that I couldn't run away even if I wanted to; and you see that I am perfectly calm and quite open with you. I have a rehearsal at eleven o'clock and it doesn't do for the producer to be late."

On this the manner of my inquisitor changed. "That's enough," he said; "I know who you are. You've been given away—sold. This is a trap we laid for you! You'd better tell the truth of your own will, and not wait till we make you. To-morrow I shall have Ivan Petrovich, too. He telephoned up from the country to say he would only be back to-morrow morning. I answered him—he thought it was the Red Guard who lodges here speaking, see? Now then." He fished out a small yellow card. It was my ticket! I had been out of the room for a moment, of course, with a guard watching me all the time, and they had found the ticket during my absence. "That?" I said. "A railway ticket." "It was among your things." This I knew to be untrue, and I could see that they did not quite understand how the ticket had come to be on the floor, or whose it was. Consequently I maintained my total ignorance of it. Still, its presence was undoubtedly evidence against me.

"Do you know one Makarov?" I was now asked.

"No."

"Whom do you know in Kamenostrovsky Prospect?"

"No one."

"In Kirochnaya Street?"

"No one." Both answers true.

"When did you last see Ivan Petrovich?"

"I really don't remember—a week ago, perhaps."

A cadaverous sailor with shifty, yet fanatic eyes, who had been at the door when I came, thrust his face into mine.

"Look here, we've treated you up to now like a comrade. Tell us everything you know and it will be better for you"—again! "But if you want it otherwise, just wait till I get you at the Gorohovaya! Don't remember, don't you? After I've had you there for a few hours I'll make you remember what you had to eat last year, day by day! And when, after that, you've sat in the Troubetskoy bastion for four or five months, your best friend won't know you!"

"I can't say more than I have said. I know nothing about this business."

"Well, then, to the Gorohovaya with him," said the Jew. "Telephone for an automobile."

The sailor rang up vehemently. "Hi, miss, extra call! 27! X. C. speaking. 27—extra! . . . Is that X. C.? Send a car and a guard at once to —— Street to fetch a prisoner. Hurry!"

I sat silent waiting for the motor, while my captors

had tea and selected the best items of Ivan Petrovich's warbrobe to carry off for their subsequent use, with much elegant mockery of the "bourgeois."

It was of importance for me to put off admitting my identity so as not to compromise the chairman of the Red Cross Committee I had represented for three and a half years who was due to leave for Finland, with a properly *visé* passport, on this very day. If I was placed beyond question before three o'clock a telephone order to Beloostrov would shut the gate. If I could tide over the intervening hours the traveller would be out of their clutches. After that, further attempt at deception would be fruitless.

The threat of torture was no idle one. In all the prisons, but especially at the Gorohovaya and in the fortress of Peter and Paul, the conditions in which prisoners are kept amount to torture. Thirty people or more may be crowded into a cell some twelve by sixteen feet, and there are cases where as many as two hundred have been herded within a space of not more than twenty-four by twenty feet. In one cell, sixteen feet by three, ten men were confined. Often there is no furniture at all and the prisoners have to lie or sit on a floor oozing with damp so that pools of water lie upon it. Where there is furniture, it consists of plank beds, one perhaps to each four or five persons, who must take turns to lie down, and the beds are alive with vermin. For five or six weeks at a time prisoners are unable to wash or for

months to change their linen, their bodies often becoming covered with sores and lice. In the Troubetskoy bastion, the worst place of confinement in the fortress, and in some of the cells at the Gorohovaya, the latrines are defective or the pans have been broken, and human excrement lies in a spreading swamp, until the prisoners are allowed to remove it. On the evidence of an Englishwoman arrested and taken to the prison in Shpalernaya Street, the commissar there, a drunken brute named Geller (probably a Russian translation of the German Heller), under pretence of search, has women publicly stripped and subjected to obscene treatment, and himself in her presence chose two girls from among the prisoners to violate at his leisure. In all the prisons disease is rife—typhus, typhoid, and scrofula —and medical attendance a farce. The food is execrable and insufficient. About two quarts of soup for five people with a quarter of a pound of inferior black bread for each, made up the whole food for the day in one large cell at the Gorohovaya, and the soup was made of fish so rotten that the maggots had to be extracted from it before it was eatable. In another, for five weeks the same quantity of bread alone was served out, with no soup or any other food. In the Military Prison for eleven hundred prisoners, the soup is made as follows: forty lb. of rotten salt fish; twenty lb. of uncleaned potatoes with the earth on them; and five lb. of lentils. These are placed

into a shut boiler and cooked until there remains nothing but the taste of rotten fish, salt, and earth. Boiling water for tea or tea substitute is served three times a day, without sugar, and in practically unlimited quantities, so that prisoners, attempting to make up for want of food by drinking become distent and puffy from the unwarranted strain put upon the kidneys and the heart. At the same time, the guards take delight in making substantial meals in the presence of their starving victims. Food sent in by the prisoners' relatives is kept at the fortress till completely rotten, and at the Gorohovaya is not delivered at all.

This is bad enough, but there is, moreover, little doubt that active torture is resorted to for the purpose of extracting information. Interrogatories are conducted at the revolver's muzzle or with the aid of a file of Red Guards, who, on the refusal of the prisoner to give the commissar the answer he requires, are ordered to fire into the wall above the prisoner's head. This is repeated lower and lower until the poor wretch's nerves completely give way and he sinks fainting to the ground. In some cases prisoners have been fired at directly with blank cartridge. In others, the ancient Spanish torture of giving salt fish to eat and refusing all drink has been adopted. Prisoners refractory to such means of persuasion are sometimes brutally flogged. This seems to be the commonest method of forcing confessions,

and it is reported that the instrument preferred is a heavy strip of india-rubber, since it leaves fewer traces on the flesh. The final stage of abomination is the employment of the Chinese executioners, since it is mostly they who now carry out the fusillades, as torturers; of this, indeed, it is impossible to speak with certainty, since the victims of this horror are not allowed to live afterwards; but it is confidently believed by sane and level-minded prisoners, who have heard the shrieks of the tortured coming from adjacent cells.

While, however, I sat in Ivan Petrovich's flat waiting for the motor, my mind was busy, not with such reflections, but with wondering how I might escape. It seemed to me that an opportunity must present itself, and I concentrated my faculties to seize it when it came. The one fixed point in the speculation was that, should indeed the chance come, it must be before my hat and coat were taken from me, since it is impossible without furs to be on the streets with the glass at 10° above zero. This meant that it could only be before I was definitely in custody at the Gorohovaya. Thus twenty minutes elapsed when another Comrade appeared of more decent exterior, with the same hard and hatchet look; he had come from the Gorohovaya in a "machine," as it is frequently termed in Russian, and was to take me back. While the Jewish chief of the perquisition was writing a sketchy report to send

to his chief, came another ring at the door. The cadaverous sailor and the other of the party, a rather jolly-looking soldier, took their places at once with pistols ready, and admitted a little middle-aged woman. As the same questioning which I had experienced began, my new guard and I went downstairs and took our seats in a magnificent Benz limousine, which had been brought for my exclusive benefit, and was waiting with another man on guard in the front seat. Ten minutes more and we rolled through the gateway into the courtyard at No. 2 Gorohovaya, the place of terror and torment.

The front door of the former prefecture, which gives on to the spacious Admiralty Prospect, is now entirely shut up, and entrance is only through the court and a small side door, so that on getting out of the motor-car with my guard our way took us up the backstairs and through the kitchen, which is situated on the second floor. Thence we emerged on to the central staircase, built in the form of a spiral, and descended to the first floor, where my guard delivered me into a writing-room for my preliminary examination. Here a railing ran across the room; behind it an official who directed operations and two clerks to enter the details in large folios before them. The door was guarded by a loutish youth in a high astrakhan hat. What struck me at once was the similarity of expression on the faces of all the servants of the X. C. I had now seen six, and here

were five more, and I can say without hesitation that such a collection of evil countenances had never before been under my eyes. They combined an astonishing degree of hardness with a look of bestial enjoyment. The debauchery of cruelty was stamped on their features. They had every appearance of being, what no doubt they were, criminals of long standing. They were all young, the oldest, I judged, not above thirty years. At the flat where my arrest took place I had been searched and all my money and papers had been taken from me. Now I was searched again, and a gold watch before overlooked discovered. I asked for a receipt.

"Oh, you will get it back," answered the man with a leer, "when you are released. Nothing here ever goes astray."

The formal interrogatory over, I was told to sit down, and waited for a quarter of an hour. Presently the little brute in the astrakhan hat, who had gone out, returned and told me to follow him, saying to the official behind the railing: "Comrade Antonov has got this case in hand." Now Antonov is reputed one of the chief ruffians at the Gorohovaya, and is second only to Boky, the successor of Uritsky, and, like him, a Jew; thus I knew that the case was considered of some importance. The little brute and I then went downstairs and on the first floor diverged from the main staircase into a corridor where the rooms were numbered from 32 to 36; this, as I learnt

afterwards, is the section for dealing with the Counter-Revolution, and Room 36 Antonov's office. Here I was sat down on a bench in the passage and remained for perhaps two minutes, when the door from the staircase opened and another half-fledged gaolbird ushered in three more prisoners. Two were known to me: the wife of Ivan Petrovich and his friend and partner. The third was a lad in his service. Our two guides began to joke together, and we snatched the moment to get abreast of the situation.

"Do we know one another?" Ivan Petrovich's friend whispered.

This gave me my cue. I understood they had not been questioned about me, and immediately said in a loud voice: "How do you do, Olga Paulovna? What is the meaning of all this? I went this morning to your flat with those tins of fish that your husband asked me for, and have been arrested and brought here."

"Oh, I am so sorry. How tiresome for you!"

"It's an absolute shame! They kept on questioning me about your husband's affairs and some expedition or other to Finland, and about someone named Makarov, who I don't know from Adam. As if I knew anything about Ivan Petrovich's business! Why, it was almost by chance that we met at all that day you and he, and this gentleman, too, whose name even I don't know, came behind the scenes

at the G. Theatre where I was producer three weeks ago, wasn't it?"

"Yes, about that, I believe," put in the friend.

"You were kind enough to invite me once or twice to tea, and it was like that last week that your husband asked me to sell him these kilki I had. I brought them this morning, and this is the result!"

By this means we had our story concerted and should not trip one another up.

"Indeed," answered the poor little woman, "I deeply regret that you should be inconvenienced, especially as you are so slightly acquainted with my husband. I trust you will not be detained for more than a day."

With which pious wish we fell silent, all doubtless conscious of its vanity. Olga Paulovna and her friend were the picture of fright. They had every reason indeed to fear. From the addresses in possession of the X. C. agents it was clear that they were on the track of a considerable organisation, and would surely not give over until they had landed all the principal fish. Ivan Petrovich had been so imprudent as to keep by him letters received from those he had dispatched in safety to Finland, letters of which he had read me some extracts, pathetic in their gratitude and simplicity. "We are sitting in a real restaurant in a real hotel, having coffee with cream, and white bread and butter! How can we thank you?" "There are shops here where every-

thing can be bought, and one can buy without cards, and there are no red flags." "This is like heaven after Sovdepia!" By themselves these letters were enough to destroy him. Olga Paulovna asked under her breath if I knew where he was. I told her what I had heard at the flat, and her drawn face blanched yet more. It seemed clear that her husband must be caught next day at home or on the railway. He would certainly be shot. All that she and their friend could look forward to was an imprisonment of several months in filth and every circumstance of horror, at the end of which he would probably, and she possibly, be shot too. A glance, moreover, at their lad, whose bravado could not control his trembling limbs, told that under the first pressure he would give everyone and everything away.

My lumpish ruffian had now left us alone with his comrade, and though I have every reason to be grateful for this oversight, it would delight me to think that he was severely punished for it. Soon the passage door opened again and another official looked in.

"Prisoners, follow me," he said, and went out on to the staircase, followed by Olga Paulovna, her friend, their guard, and the lad. I was sitting at the end of the bench, and got up last. As they passed out I saw that the moment for which I had watched had come. Olga Paulovna's guard did not know and was not responsible for me, since they had come

from a different room; nor did this new official know me, though I was doubtless on the paper in his hand, and he would rely upon the guards to see that all the prisoners went with him. My moment, the only possible moment, had come, and I determined to avail myself of it.

For a beginning I sat down again on the bench and stayed for half a minute or so. Then I lounged up, as if bored with waiting, and strolled through the door on to the staircase. Several persons passed me, but took no notice. Up or down? was the question. I decided, down. The staircase must probably lead to a door giving access to the court. Down I went. And a door, sure enough, was there, but on the further side of a guard-room, where a number of Reds were resting in the midst, as I could see through a glass panel, of stacked rifles and several machine-guns. This way, I decided, was too risky. I turned, retraced my steps upstairs, past the first-floor landing, and up to the second. There, recognising the way by which my guard had brought me into the building, I passed through a gallery and found myself in the kitchen. A number of cooks and other servants were busily preparing dinner on a large scale. Two men going in the opposite direction passed me. In my military coat and high fur hat and the Cossack-like beard I had grown in the course of the last two months, they doubtless took me for one going about the ordinary business of the place.

So I reached the back door, went down the backstairs and was in the court. At the gate was a guard, as I had seen on entering, and it is known that the sentinels here are chosen from among the most thoroughgoing Communists, of which indeed they have the air, being dirty, slatternly, and of a generally debased appearance; as I crossed the court, I saw that there were five of them. Only one danger now between me and freedom, but a grave one: I had no pass, and to get out of any Bolshevik institution, even one of such inoffensiveness as the office of the International Sleeping Car Co., a written pass is required. Still more from the very centre of the Red Terror. No alternative, however, existed; I must risk it. Now in the course of pilgrimages to various commissaries I had noticed that, although in theory a pass is required for everyone, in practice it is not always insisted on, and my choice was made accordingly. At a fair pace, but taking care not to hurry, I approached the gateway. "Pass?" called out one of the guards. Without stopping I answered in an absolute manner: "From room No. 36." The phrase acted like magic; no one attempted to stop me, and without further query I passed under the arch and into the street.

For the moment, at least, I was free. I had been conscious all the time of no special emotion, but now my forehead began to feel hot and my legs displayed a desire to break into a run. Controlling them I

walked quickly along the Admiralty Prospect to a tramway station, and took a car up the Nevsky; luckily finding about four roubles in stamps in a pocket of my great coat, otherwise I should have had to walk. The Admiralty clock showed ten minutes to one. It was two hours and a-half since I had been caught in the trap, and I had been something over an hour at the Gorohovaya. My position was one of imminent danger. The moment my absence was discovered there would be a tremendous hue and cry. In the first place it appeared to me that the X.C. over-estimated my importance as a prisoner, and would redouble their efforts to have me again; and in the second, an escape from the Gorohovaya is so rare an occurrence that they would leave no stone unturned in the search. Two months before a prisoner had succeeded in making off, and the regulations in the place had been strung up to a point of almost unbearable strictness in consequence. Should I be captured, there was now no doubt of my fate; it would be, in the pithy Russian idiom, "to the wall." At the Liteiny Prospect I changed into a car for the Finland Station. My idea was that the X.C. would at all events at the first moment, not expect me to make for the frontier. If I could catch the 1.15 train, on which my friends were due to leave for Beloostrov, I could get money from them and find a guide in the village where I had left my bag to cross the frontier the same night. But I got to the station ten minutes late.

Without money, without passport or other papers, without shelter, and easily recognisable from the photograph attached to the documents in the hands of the X.C., I seemed in a fairly tight corner. Money even for trams with the tariff of sixty kopecks, was running short, and I was getting uncommonly hungry. In these circumstances, it was to a Jewish friend that I determined to apply, and he justified my choice nobly, fortified me with bread and sausage and a substantial loan of money. At another friend's I shaved my beard, at yet another's obtained a close-fitting round cap of coarse fur that, to a casual glance, quite altered the shape of my head. Another problem was food. Being without a legal lodging, I lacked also a bread card. Well, bread could be bought in the street at one of the contraband markets born of the Bolshevik policy of creating famine. But besides a card for bread it is necessary to have a card in order to obtain a meal at one of the "social dining-rooms," since restaurants no longer exist, and at the cabmen's tea-houses, the only ones permitted, nothing can be obtained to eat; which, it should be noted, is also part of the Bolshevik system of preventing the populace from organising their discontent by forcing them to think morning, noon, and night of food, and again of food, and of nothing but food. This difficulty I circumvented, but in a way not to be related, lest trouble should befall a benefactor who enabled me, which was all-important, to dine without a card. Thus I spent a

week of considerable excitement, changing my place of abode four times and casting about the while for means of escape. Hotels, like restaurants, are things of the past; consequently I had to rely on private hospitality, most generously offered, but accepted with the knowledge that my saviours were risking liberty, if not life, for me. It was nervous work this, sleeping in the passage or on a sofa handy to the backdoor, with one's boots beside one, ready to make off at the first alarm. Still more trying was the moment when one rang at the door coming in, in ignorance would it be opened by friend or foe. At the place where I dined I fed with my coat on and with my money on the table in case I should have to jump for the backdoor. Evidence that the hunt for me was hot came in plenty. My old lodgings, of course, were visited the first night after my escape and vainly ransacked. Twice I saw spies watching the houses where I had slept, and had to sheer off, walking the streets for some hours, no very pleasant amusement in mid-winter and on a Petrograd diet. Twice the houses where I had slept were searched after I had flitted, though each time the actual flat that was my asylum escaped. Once I avoided by a few minutes a patrol that was having a general hunt for suspicious characters.

On the third day of this life I got word from George, the railway man in the village where I had slept. All was quiet, he reported. Nothing suspicious had occurred. Let me come next day and he would find

a pilot for me. Overjoyed at the news, I went, and arrived in safety. Sure enough, nothing suspicious on the road or at the little station; no one seemed to be watching the neighbourhood. But when I entered the house, George's wife, who had a visitor, started on seeing me and put her finger to her lips. Presently she came to me in the inner room and breathed that a descent had been made on the house of Ivan Petrovich's chief agent. The Red Guards had burst in at five o'clock in the morning, arrested everybody, including the little Swiss lady, smashed, torn to ribbons, and carried off everything, ripping up the pillows and mattresses, and strewing their contents on the floor in the fury of their search. One of them had been left in possession; so that, had I on my first visit slept in this house and now gone back there, I should have been caught to a certainty. A black-haired man—doubtless the Jew who had been in command at the flat—had said in the hearing of an old woman, the only one out of the nine in the house to be left, that those caught the week before were done for, and that he had cooked Ivan Petrovich's goose. She and her husband had been through a hell of suspense lest the Reds should come to them, too, but so far they had not. Now the visitor left and George came in, but only to tell bad news. The Reds had been to yet two more houses, made more arrests, and had been heard to say that they would return next night and not rest till they had cleared out everybody in the place con-

nected with Ivan Petrovich's chief man. To me it seemed likely that the first house on their list would be that of George. A rapid retreat was now my only course; but perhaps it could be made northwards—into Finland? George's wife volunteered to find the man who he had meant me to go with, had all been well, for George's own nerves were too jumpy to make him a useful ambassador; but she came back saying that the other was far too much alarmed to touch the business and the whole village in a state of panic. There was no help for it, and so soon as it was dark I sallied forth, George taking my bag on a minute hand-sledge to the station. His relief when the train drew in, and he could be sure that I should no longer endanger him and his, was delightful, and we arranged that he should come up to Petrograd on the next day but one to give me news. Seeing that to have helped me over the frontier would have been a very profitable business for him, when he did not keep the appointment I felt sure that he had been arrested.

In the course of these alarums and excursions ample leisure was afforded me to reflect on the causes of the catastrophe. During my work in the theatre, which had enabled me to live for two months as normal a life as could be lived nowadays in Petrograd, there were several persons who knew or suspected that I was an Englishman, but even if they thought it their business to wonder they could not have known under what documents I was living. Russians are

accustomed to many official fictions. Besides, they would almost surely think that I had regulated my position with the Bolshevik Government and was living openly and registered, as foreigners were bound to do. Only four persons in Petrograd were acquainted with my precise situation, knew my name and the name and character inscribed on my passport and professional documents; and of three I was absolutely sure. There was also one in Moscow who had got me my passport, and for his own sake he must keep silent. But he told the fourth of these four, the mother of a young author who had before been my assistant, that the Moscow representatives of our Red Cross Committee had been denounced and one arrested as agents of a British conspiracy, and she, in fear for what might happen to her son, asked counsel of an acquaintance in such a way that he guessed the truth. This man, L., a former opera singer and now a theatrical impresario with whom I was in business relations, has the appearance and manners of a thorough gentleman; a Pole and member of the Polish Committee, he speaks several languages, and is an educated and travelled man of good capacity. He it was who had now denounced me. I was led to this conclusion by evidence from several sides, and once formed it was afterwards confirmed in a striking manner. Having, in the first place, got his clue as to my nationality, he learned from the same source that I intended to leave the country. He next made the acquaintance of Ivan

Petrovich through the person who had recommended me to him, on pretence that he also was desirous of being transported out of Bolshevik-land. He was thus in a position to gauge with fair accuracy when my move was to be made. I had in fact expected to go with a party two days earlier, and it seems probable that L. insinuated someone into this company who betrayed it on the frontier, in the expectation that I would be among it also. Three facts serve to bring the crime home to him. First, three days before my attempt, he wrote, underlining the words, to the chairman of my committee, that "*he wished Ivan Fedorovich*" (my Russian name and patronymic) "*to have a good journey,*" and followed up his letter on the next day by a barefaced attempt at blackmail. Secondly, the moment I had slipped through the net, he launched a denunciation against my chief, who had, fortunately, without L.'s knowing, already received all the necessary papers for leaving by the legal road, and, on the revelation of the blackmailer's game, moved swiftly to another flat.

And on the very next day the machinery of the Gorohovaya was put in motion to effect the arrest, but vainly, the bird having flown. Thirdly, I having escaped from prison and L. having thus lost his other quarry, he moved heaven and earth, as was reported to me by a friend who was able to watch him, to have my whereabouts discovered and myself caged again. The agents at Ivan Petrovich's flat had evidently ex-

pected me, and said as much, though they did not know who I was and were puzzled by the apparent excellence of my papers. But the crowning proof of L.'s treachery came when I was already in safety in Finland. On my mentioning his name to an Allied secret service man, the latter astonished me by saying that he knew about L. already, that he was believed himself to have crossed the frontier and back several times, and was suspected of being an *agent provocateur*. Two days later a young Russian officer who had been in the employment of the Bolsheviks, as many are to serve their own ends, and had by error been released from the prison where he was immured on discovery of his helping brother officers to escape beyond the Bolshevik lines, broke through to Finland. He knew L.'s name well, he said. It was on a list he had had in his possession of agents on the Staff at Gorohovaya, who get a salary and ten per cent. on the property of the victims they denounce, and have sometimes names that used to move in the best Petrograd society. For all his delicacy and culture and reiterated horror of the Bolsheviks, L. was neither more nor less than a professional informer.

To obtain a reward for my capture, the importance of which he doubtless exaggerated, to whet the appetite of his paymasters, he did not scruple to have a score of people, guilty only of wishing themselves, or of helping others, to escape from tyranny to freedom, thrown into noisome prisons, and between five and

ten of them in all probability shot. Such a pitch of revolting callousness and baseness, read of but hardly realised as a product of despotism in the worst pages of Roman history, has the Bolshevik terror produced in Russia.

"Go to Madame R.," a friend had said, "if you are in such a hole. She is a wonderful woman, an enthusiast, and I am sure she can help you." To the address given me, therefore, I went. Madame R. welcomed me warmly. "I knew you the moment I saw you in the train," she said to my surprise, "in spite of your beard. I often used to see you at the meetings of the Society of the Year 1914." This Society of the Year 1914 was founded at the beginning of the war to fight against German influence, and in 1916 numbered some eight thousand members. Besides Russians, it had on its books a few French, English, and Serbians, who realised that the Allies' chance in Russia depended on their winning the sympathy of the liberal elements in society and helping these in the struggle with the reactionary and pro-German Court. Madame R., the daughter of a well-known General, had been prominent at meetings of the society both before the revolution and after it in helping to defeat the plans of a venal secretary who attempted to capture the organisation for the Bolsheviks. As I looked at her now, I saw that she was the woman who had accosted me the first day I went to N. "Yes," she said, in answer to my question, "I

felt sure you were making for the frontier, and I wanted so much to help you if I could. But what an escape you have had! If they catch you they will never let you go alive. We must manage to get you off. I have helped several people. But it is very difficult now. Two of my parties have had to return. One, a relation of mine and his wife, were within two versts of the frontier when their driver got frightened and refused to go further. They tried to walk, but the snow was too deep and they are elderly people and had to turn back. Now I am trying to find another way for them. People must be saved from this abominable life when they can; it is not life, but death in life." "And the other party?" "Oh, that was still more dreadful! They are a young officer and his sister. They had actually crossed the frontier and the Finns sent them back from the village they reached. They managed to telephone from there to the Commandant at Terioki, but he confirmed the orders that they were to be turned away. Numbers of our poor refugees have been refused asylum like that. Isn't it monstrous of the Finns? In many cases it is sheer murder, as those forced to return by daytime are caught and shot by the Reds. How my two got through, they hardly know themselves; they were fired at crossing the river and in the woods, and had to bury their bags in the snow, and finally got back half dead with exhaustion." It was arranged that I should return next day to confer with a peasant woman expected to come

up to Petrograd and report. Like my George, however, she did not appear. News came that the frontier was all alive with guards, and that six hundred roubles blood-money was offered for each fugitive caught alive or dead. Prospects began to look poor, and at least it seemed clear that a week or so must pass before a plan could be hit upon, which in my hunted condition and with no papers other than a forged extract from a house register, whereby I assumed the *rôle* of a Roumanian chauffeur, hardly good for a minute's inspection should I be stopped, was far from comforting.

But now unexpectedly hope dawned in another quarter. "I have heard," said the elderly relative afore-mentioned, "that another way exists—across the sea, by sledge over the ice. There are smugglers who bring butter and sweets from Finland, and I am in touch with a man who may induce them to take us back with them. If you care to join us, come at five o'clock on Friday to arrange terms with the man. He proposes to go on Saturday." Friends whom I consulted were sceptical. From Sestroretzk, the last point on the Gulf of Finland this side the frontier, it was known that parties had been driven across; but I could not hope to reach Sestroretzk, owing to the strict control of passports on the railway line thither. By sea from Petrograd to Terioki must be hard on seventy versts, a long night's drive, to say nothing of difficulties of the ice, Red patrols, and the forts of

Cronstadt to circumvent. On an ice-boat it could certainly be done; but inquiry showed that ice-boats were not procurable. Yet no chance could be let slip, and at five punctually I was at Madame R.'s back door. I was greeted with—"We leave here at seven this evening! Can you come?" "I will be back before seven." A hurried dash for my lodging; and here I convinced myself that means of escape had not come a moment too soon, for in the courtyard lounged a hulking fellow of semi-soldierly cut and scowling looks evidently on the watch. True, he may not have been on the watch for me, but the chances seemed in favour of the theory. I decided not to risk taking my suitcase, an English-looking leather article, as being too conspicuous in the circumstances, so, making a hasty meal, I flung a few clothes, a rug, my diary and most valuable papers, the remains of a brandy flask, into a sack of totally disreputable appearance, and stumped forth with it over my shoulder, and with cap well pulled down, a typical "sackman," one of those who come in from the country of an evening and sell butter, bread, or potatoes at prices that soon make them millionaires. In this guise my spy did not even look at me.

It was a wonderful starlight night, but warm, with the glass at about 20° Fahrenheit, and as I drove from Madame R.'s with the young man who had engineered our expedition to its starting-point on the Islands, Petrograd had never looked more beautiful.

We passed the deserted shell of the British Embassy where Cromie had met his symbolic death, and across the white belt of the great river, our izvozhchik cursing the Bolsheviks freely. Tranquil elation possessed me. We were free from pursuit, and but for an accident or a denunciation from some fresh quarter would soon be clear. At the worst there would be an end to uncertainty. I only regretted that I had sent away my pistol (sewn up in a cushion) by the legal exit, when being still with lawful papers it was dangerous for me to be found with arms; the more to be regretted, since it afterwards turned out that the Bolsheviks had found and confiscated it. Almost at the extreme point of one of the Islands we stopped, and entered a dark house, the resort of the Finnish smugglers. Five or six of them were in the kitchen, bold-looking fellows, all, with the exception of the master of the house, very young. One had been in the employ of a British wood merchant and became voluble in a mixture of equally broken English and Russian on learning my nationality. In the little parlour were two Jews, one well known in his own town as a patriot and having had a large price set on his head by the Bolsheviks, the other fleeing, as I guessed, for some affair of speculation; these, with my two elderly acquaintances and myself, made up our party. A long wait now ensued. It was not ten o'clock, and the guides had chosen half-past eleven as the best hour for the start, timing it

so that we should pass the forts of Cronstadt at between three and four in the morning, according to them the hour most likely to escape observation. The delay was beguiled by a samovar of majestic proportions, at an equally majestic price; for its owner, under pretence of fear for his skin through our presence, rooked us of fifty roubles a head, reflecting maybe that as our money might fall into the hands of a Red patrol, the more of it that found its way to his pocket before that sad occurrence the better. At length, and having paid our toll beforehand, we were summoned; and emerging from the blackness of the unlit hall stumbled into two rough country sledges that had been brought up to the door. The loads were fairly heavy; in one three passengers, in the other two with the luggage, and in each two Finns who took it by turns to drive. In any other circumstances my position would have seemed one of extreme discomfort, for I had half to lie, half to recline on the bottom of the sledge with my back to the horse, so that every jolt of the vehicle over the rough ice sent a jar from the top of my spine to the bottom; but my spiritual content was such that I hardly noticed physical annoyances. On the ice it was much colder than in the town, though still for the time of year comparatively warm, and the first three hours' travelling with the glass a few degrees above zero (Fahr.) made usual heavy Russian winter clothing feel like a zephyr. Much of the time the Finns ran

alongside, padding the ice with quick springy steps on their toes, that enabled them not to slip backward, as invariably happened to me when I tried to run for the sake of warmth. It was hard to know whether most to admire their endurance or that of their little horses, which went for eight hours without a break, very seldom stopping for a consultation between their masters as to the route, and at the end took their loads uphill into the town of Terioki at a fast trot. Our course lay in a wide curve away from the shore; as the lights of the delicate line of Oranienbaum scintillated in the western distance, and Cronstadt rose, a crown of glowing amber, in the centre of the snow-besprinkled blackness of the ice, on our left bow.

Suddenly I awoke; I had dozed; the stars were out, Cronstadt vanished, and a whitey wall of mist stretched over heaven and horizon. How without compass the Finns could find their way through this was hard to conceive; but they seemed to have the instinct of foxes and scarcely faltered. The only two serious checks were once to find a causeway across a weak spot where an icebreaker had not long before hacked her path through, and again on an alarm of a Red patrol. My less acute senses detected nothing, but suddenly the driver pulled up, and signalling to his follower sat for a moment of the tensest silence, then dashed off in another direction at top speed. That there was cause for alarm was certain; and only

two nights afterwards a party of four coming the same way were set upon and killed, including the one lady among them, by Red Guards or by Bolshevik marauders on their own. The last hour, as we neared the shore, was fitted with a strange illusion of endless galleries and stately marble columns; I thought it had been a dream, but afterwards learnt that three out of my four companions had experienced the same; leaving no doubt that we were victims of a kind of nocturnal mirage. At last with a bump and a heave we rose from the ice and plunged over the frozen, snowy dunes. Fifteen minutes more, and we were knocking up a young farmer and his wife, who gave us unlimited coffee—with milk!—and bread, and butter, such luxuries as are not to be found in all Petrograd, no, nor in any town in Russia where the Bolshevik screw is at work, crushing out the life of the land. And all for ten roubles a head. The simple meal seemed a symbol of our re-won liberty, simple enough when it is with you every day, but, when you are deprived of it, a feast beyond price. Only those who have lived under the ceaseless, killing strain of the Bolshevik tyranny; who have seen peasants selling their supplies shudder and blanch at the approach of a stranger; who have known the fear for friends and relatives arrested and within an ace of death; who have seen old people starved, beauty despoiled, the ignorant and vicious lording it in heaven's despite; and have felt the

daily, cramping necessity to wonder night and day whether they will have food enough next week, next day, next hour—only these, meeting afterwards in freedom, can taste in its full flavour the rich joy to be free, and can pray with understanding hearts that condign punishment may be meted out to the murderers and robbers who have hired themselves to be the agents of German intrigue and usurped the name and the powers of the people of Russia.

THE END

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